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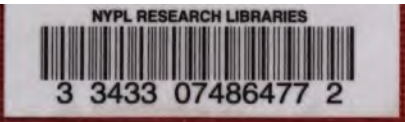
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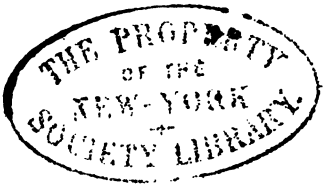
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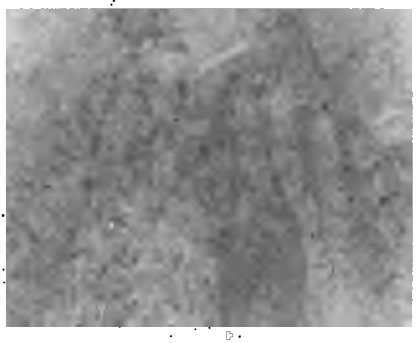

CHELSEA PENSIONERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

THE SUBALTERN.

"But it seemed as if this confirmation of a rumour too hôrrible to have been hitherto credited had driven reason at once and for ever from her throne."

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VOL. XIX.

THE

CHELSEA PENSIONERS.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "THE SUBALTERN."

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WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

PREFACE.

THERE is not much to be said in reference to such ork as the present, which, if it tell its own story at must tell it with sufficient perspicuity. But my olisher having requested me to preface this edition :h some account of the real incidents on which the reral tales are founded, I cannot refuse to comply th his wish; even while I feel that the reading iblic will derive but a slender increase of useful iowledge from the proceeding.

Of the first of the tales, "The Gentle Recruit," I n compelled to acknowledge, that in all its parts it purely imaginary. I never met with any one in real fe who could in any way come up to the principal iaracter, as he is there described; nor can I trace ick the idea of such a character to any hint or anec- ote derived from the conversation of others. Feeling, erefore, that its imperfections must lie absolutely

at my own door, I hereby offer for them all the apology of which they are susceptible.

The second story, "A Day on the Neutral Ground," was suggested to me by an incident in the American war of independence, of which, long ago, I heard an old officer speak. The true history was this: There were two brothers in an English regiment, of dispositions diametrically opposite, but whose regard for one another could not be annihilated by all the differences that occurred between them. The elder was a generous and honourable youth; the younger a sad libertine—with his fits of generosity too, as is not unusual among men of his stamp. Like my imaginary hero, he accepted the hospitality of an American gentleman in an hour of need; and fell in love with his host's daughter. Unfortunately, however, there was no principle in him, and the poor girl became his victim. He carried her off from her father's house, and she lived with him for a while as his mistress. But the old man never recovered from the blow. The story got wind—the seducer became, as he deserved to be, an object of abhorrence to his messmates, and his love grew into hatred. He blamed the creature whom he had wronged, for the discomfort of his position, and abandoned her. I forget the particulars of the case as it went on. I only remember that he either quitted or was obliged to quit the service; and that his elder brother sent back the broken-

hearted girl to her relatives, having settled upon her an ample provision. This is a sad story, but it is a true one. How far I may have marred it in the telling, is for others, not for myself, to judge.

Of "Saratoga" I have nothing to say, except that I believe it to contain a tolerably accurate narrative of General Burgoyne's disastrous campaign; and that as it makes no pretensions to more than this, it must be taken for what it is worth. The by-plot, if such it may be called, is by far too unimportant to deserve notice. But the anecdotes which I have ventured to introduce, in reference to the death and burial of General Fraser, have at least so much to say for themselves, that they are authentic. In *Thatcher's Journal*,—a curious, if not a very valuable compilation,—published about twenty years ago in Boston, the circumstances are all detailed; and I stand indebted to the editor of that work for my knowledge of them.

The tale of "Maida" is of a different order, and has more foundation on which to rest. I cannot, however bring myself to go into any particulars; for the original of the coward who is there described served in the same regiment with myself—and though he has changed his profession, he is still, I believe, alive. Let me make for him, and for those of a similar temperament, what excuse I can. I believe that he did his best to overcome a great constitutional weakness, and I am sure that he was and is to this hour, far more deserving of compassion than of censure.

The "Pyrenean Adventure" is likewise founded on fact, and as I was myself an actor in the little drama I have nothing more to say in illustration of it. As for the last story of all, the "Rivals," I am indebted for the ground work of that to a lady now deceased,—to the high order of whose mind, as well as to the gentleness of her disposition, all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance will bear testimony. Her name will sound strange in the ears of all beyond a very narrow circle, yet the late Miss Colquhoun, of Camstradden, was no ordinary woman.

And now I think that I have accomplished my task, unless indeed it be expected that I give an account of the circumstances which induced me to write the introductory chapter. The pedestrian tour which is there described, took place a good many years ago, and differed in reality from the tale, as it is told, only in this. I did not travel alone, but had as my companions on the occasion, Mr. Lockhart, and Mr. Trail, now of Union Hall Office; and, if the remembrance which they retain of this little episode in their lives at all resemble mine, there are few on which they continue to look back with greater satisfaction.

Chelsea College, October, 1840.

F

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INTRODUCTION.

It was on a beautiful morning in June, in the year 18—, that I sallied forth from the gate of ——— College, Oxford, for the purpose of making a tour through certain of the midland counties of England, which, from a variety of circumstances not necessary to be detailed, I had hitherto enjoyed no opportunity of visiting. My mode of travelling was one which I would venture strongly to recommend to all such as have abundance of time at their command, and are desirous of making the most of it. I journeyed on foot, with a fishing-rod in my hand, a basket, containing a change of necessaries, at my back, and a volume of Shakspeare in my pocket; and my sole companion was the sagacious and faithful dog, which had so long and through so many strange scenes followed my fortunes. Thus equipped and thus attended, I felt that scarcely any mal-adventure which might fall in my way was likely to inconvenience me; whilst I anticipated, as the sequel proved, not on mistaken grounds, a great deal of enjoyment, as well as some instruction, from the excursion.

I passed through the seat of learning just as the first rays of the sun were lighting up its spires and domes, and gilded minarets, causing a very gush of glory to be shed over a scene which is never beheld to greater advantage than when in repose; and after a few minutes' walk at a brisk rate I soon found myself trudging along the smooth and open road that leads to Woodstock. In a moment, every trace of sombre and serious thought was obliterated.

I looked round upon a smiling and fertile country;—upon green fields and neat hedges, groves in full leaf, and the silver Isis rolling his classic stream between banks covered with the richest verdure; whilst I listened to a flood of nature's sweetest music, poured from thousands of tiny throats, and pealing as it were, in full chorus, up to the gates of heaven.

As I am not going to try the patience of the reader, by bringing before him the minute details of a journey, which, though exceedingly agreeable at the moment, produced but few events worthy of record; it will be sufficient if I inform him, that having passed through Woodstock, breakfasted at a lonely inn by the way-side, and spent the night at a village, the name of which I have forgotten, I arrived, about noon on the following day, at Stratford: beautiful in itself, and beautifully situated upon the Avon; but deriving its chief attraction from being the birth-place of the greatest genius whom England, or perhaps the world has produced. It will readily be believed that I visited the house shown as the early residence of Shakspeare, with the reverence of an idolater entering the palace of his god; and that not all the absurdity of his female representative, which was not trifling, could excite more than a passing thought, unworthy of the place. From thence I took the road to Warwick Castle, inspecting with a curious eye that most perfect specimen of baronial grandeur; after which, I prepared to penetrate as far as Birmingham, Lichfield, and Stafford. But before I succeeded in reaching the nearest of these points, certain events befel, of which it will be necessary to give some account; because to these the reader is indebted for the existence of the volumes now submitted to his perusal.

It is not my ordinary practice, when travelling on foot, to follow the King's highway very faithfully; nor was I more particular in the selection of my path after I quitted Warwick, than on other occasions: on the contrary, I took a direction so as to ascend the course of the river, casting a line into each promising stream and pool as I approached it, and loitering my time away, or turning it to account, in proportion as my sport happened to be attractive or other-

wise. I was thus employed, a large hamlet lying at no great distance a-head, when a genteel-looking man, apparently about sixty years of age or upwards, approached me. Like myself, he was equipped in the garb of a sportsman, with a rod and basket, the latter evidently not empty; and as his face was turned down the stream, it was easy to perceive that he was not, as yet, weary of his employment. All the world knows that there is no class of men more friendly disposed, or more communicative concerning the business of the day, than anglers; whose occupation, indeed, draws them one towards another with chords of the finest sympathy. The stranger was not different in these respects from other brethren of the hook and line: he stopped as soon as he arrived within a rod's length of me; and permitting the trout to enjoy a few minutes of undisturbed recreation among the natural flies, we entered into conversation.

At first our questions and replies were illustrative of nothing more than might have been expected from the circumstances under which we met. The stranger hoped that I had had good sport; desired to know whether I were acquainted with the stream; what flies I had used, and which proved the most killing; volunteering at the same time, in case my own hooks were not supplied, to enrich me with a cast of the true kind; whilst I, as a matter of course, met his advances as they merited, and refused not the assistance thus frankly offered. But there was another bond of union between us, besides our common predilection for angling, which was not slow in being felt as well as acknowledged. A single glance served to satisfy me as to the profession and character of my new acquaintance. A carriage more than ordinarily erect; shoulders well thrown back; an expanded chest; and powdered hair, collected behind into a cue and tied up with a black ribbon: these with a narrow black stock about his neck, and one arm stiff at the elbow joint, pointed him out as a soldier of the old school; and as I have always entertained the highest respect for that gallant and honourable class of men, I was not backward in making him aware of the estimation in which I held him. Having satisfied his curiosity as to

whence I came and whither I was going, I became
turn the chief speaker, by remarking, that it was not nec
sary to inquire into his condition and circumstances, in
much as his general address gave very satisfactory evide
touching the gallant career which he had run. The vete
was manifestly well pleased with the compliment, impl
rather than expressed. A smile passed over his weath
beaten countenance, as he answered, "You have gues
rightly; I belong to a class more numerous, and therefc
perhaps, less generally esteemed than it used to be.
am I sufficiently partial to the profession of arms to belie
that, even now, the country has no cause to be ashamed
the names which, unfortunately for themselves, crowd
half-pay list." This, as the reader may suppose, was bu
prelude to other and more interesting discussions. The
gentleman sat down upon the green bank, inviting me
follow his example; and before long, I found myself
tening to a detail of adventures, as varied and romantic
a service of thirty years in every quarter of the globe m
be supposed to have produced.

He had gone on in this strain for some time, enlargi
with the garrulity of old age, on the merits of those wh
deeds have long ceased to be remembered, when sudden
as it were, he recollected himself and stopped short, just
I was about to be made acquainted with the particulars
a stratagem which caused the surrender of some hill fc
of unpronounceable name, in the Mysore country.

"You have cheated me into playing the egotist with
vengeance," said he, "and I am boring you with matt
in which it is quite impossible that you can take a
interest; but the fault is your own entirely. It is e
enough to set an old fellow like myself talking; but
him once get on his favourite topic, and it is no easy mat
to quiet him again."

It was now that, in order to allay the old gentlema
scruples, I judged it necessary to inform him, that I h
myself served in the army, and hence that he ran no risk
wearying me by details which I could feel as well as co
prehend. The announcement produced an instantane
effect upon him. From the first his manner had b

polite, easy, and familar; now it became not friendly only, but warm and cordial. He declared his extreme satisfaction at having made my acquaintance, inquired particularly as to the corps to which I had been attached, professed himself acquainted with its commandant, and lauded its gallantry; then pointing out that the sun was getting low in the heavens, and that it was time to think of returning home, he expressed a desire that I would accompany him, in terms which I knew not very well how to reject. "Though an old bachelor," continued he, "I do not live alone. There are twelve of us in all, half-pay officers, who keep house together. We inhabit a building at the extremity of that village, which, for distinction' sake, we have named Little Chelsea; and if you will do me the favour to become my guest there, I will introduce you to as brave and gentlemanly a set of fellows as ever smelt powder, or warmed themselves at the fire of a bivouac. I promise you, too, that if your taste lean towards narratives of military adventure, it will there be amply gratified, inasmuch as the evening never passes without one or more stories, connected with our past lives, being publicly narrated; so put up your tackle for to-day. You shall spend this evening, and to-morrow and next day, if you relish our society, amongst us; and you shall leave us whenever business or satiety may urge your departure."

The reader will easily believe that it required no very urgent entreaties on the part of my kind friend to prevail upon me to close with his liberal proposal. Besides that I really did not very well know where to look for a caravansary, there was something in the manner and appearance of the individual himself peculiarly attractive; whilst I was curious to ascertain how affairs were conducted in an establishment, of which I began by degrees to receive an obscure impression that I had previously heard something. I accordingly accepted his invitation at once, and we set to work in the instant, unscrewing our rods, and disposing our flies and tackle in their depôts. This done, we turned our faces towards the village, and walked on like men who had known each other for years, rather than acquaintances of some half-hour's standing.

Whilst traversing the space between the river and the village, I obtained from my companion a full account of the establishment of Little Chelsea. It consisted, as has been already stated, of twelve members; or, to speak more accurately, because in the language of the Club, of twelve pensioners. These, as often as vacancies by death or other causes occurred, were filled up, as the members of other clubs are filled up—by ballot; but there were certain qualifications which a man must necessarily possess, before he could be eligible to election into the establishment. In the first place, the person proposed must be an officer on half-pay, who had served in the regular army three years at the least, one of which must have been spent in the field, or before the enemy. In the next place, no officer could be chosen unless he had received one or more wounds, sufficiently severe to entitle him to a pension. These were the great and fundamental principles, if I may so speak, upon which the Club was founded; but, besides these, there were other regulations, from which no deviation could be allowed. The proposed member must be known as a man of unblemished character; of mild temper, and gentlemanly address; addicted neither to drinking nor gaming, nor any other propensity, the indulgence of which might weaken or interrupt the harmony of the circle; and he must pledge himself to pay implicit obedience to such by-laws as the society should from time to time see fit to enact for its own management. Whoever possessed the above requisites, and was willing to subscribe to these terms, might become, on proper recommendation, a Chelsea Pensioner; and few, once admitted, were, as my informant assured me, in any hurry to quit the hospital.

With respect again to the style and mode of living: these were made to resemble, as nearly as circumstances would allow, the system pursued in the quarters of a well-regulated regiment. To each of the junior pensioners was allowed a single apartment, to a certain number of the seniors two, which were fitted up according to the taste and at the expense of the occupants; but the dining and drawing-rooms were public property, both as to the furnishing and occupancy. All meals were of course eaten

together, except in cases of sickness; and the cost of keeping up the establishment,—of servants, books, newspapers, &c., was defrayed out of the common fund. Finally, an adequate share of attendance was furnished by three male servants, all of whom, like their masters, were discharged soldiers. There was a housekeeper to superintend the affairs of the kitchen, a laundress to take care of the washing, with a couple of women to keep the apartments in order; whilst a cook, whose ability had long been exercised for the benefit of the mess of the —— regiment of dragoons, took charge of all culinary matters, to the perfect satisfaction of his employers. Such was the establishment of Little Chelsea; the expenses attendant upon which, including the rent of a house and necessary offices, were covered by an annual subscription from each pensioner, of one hundred pounds. "Thus," continued my informant, "for a very moderate sum, we contrive to live as we have been accustomed to do,—in comfort, and comparative elegance; and it is no self-flattery to affirm, that we command the respect of all classes with whom we come into contact. The village tradesmen live almost wholly by us, for we pay our bills weekly, and are never in arrear; and the neighbouring gentry, finding us neither obstrusive nor presuming, pay us every attention in their power, and treat us with great civility. We have a standing rule against shooting, except where leave is specially granted; by adhering strictly to which, we avoid all squabbles and brawls with our neighbours; but in fishing many of us indulge; and when the hunting season comes round, several, who can afford to keep horses, partake in that amusement. Then we are great chess-players; we take in a couple of newspapers, the Quarterly and Edinburgh Reviews, with Blackwood, and the Sporting Magazines; and though we never allow gambling, either in public or private, a quiet rubber, at the rate of sixpenny points, passes away many a winter's evening. In short, sir, I cannot particularize all the benefits that accrue from this admirable establishment, of which I have the honour and supreme felicity of being the founder; but of most of these you will soon have an opportunity of judging for yourself, for the hospital is *before us.*"

Just as my conductor ceased to speak, I found myself at the entrance of a neat hamlet, the houses of which ran in two parallel rows, one on each side of the high road. They amounted to some thirty or forty, generally small in their dimensions, but universally clean; and they could boast of a couple of butchers' stalls, three or four grocers' shops, and an inn, at once larger and more respectable in appearance than might have been looked for in so secluded a corner. About a quarter of a mile beyond the hamlet stood a building, of the precise character of which it would not have been easy to judge from a mere superficial examination. Had it been placed in the middle of a park, or shaded by a grove of tall trees, the stranger would have pronounced it at once the residence of some old-fashioned squire, who did not care to trouble his head or expend his money in seeking to modernize a mansion that had sheltered his forefathers for many generations. As such, however, was not the case—as it stood by the way-side, without so much as a grass-plot in front, and presented no ornament of garden or lawn, its appearance came nearer to that of a manufactory, or parish work-house, than any thing besides. Yet, on closer observation, it was not difficult to discover that the pile, shapeless and clumsy as it was, had about it an air of considerable pretension. The walls were newly whitewashed, the steps that led to the main entrance were remarkably clean, every window from top to bottom was sashed, and few were without the appendant of curtains. There was a court-yard behind, moreover, at the extremity of which stood a row of stables, coach-houses, and other outbuildings; whilst the fences communicating with them were all in the best state of repair. Such was the pile towards which my guide directed my attention as the hospital of which he had spoken, and to which he bade me heartily welcome for as long a period as I might find it convenient to sojourn.

My civil host was yet in the act of speaking, when a very decisive proof of the spirit which reigned within his establishment was given. There suddenly arose from the yard behind the house, a sound familiar to me as "a tale twice told," though certainly not expected in this part of the *world. Instead of* a bell, or gong, or other peaceable instru-

ment, a well-blown bugle rang out its warning note, for the purpose of recalling such pensioners as might be abroad, and directing such as were at home to commence preparations for dinner. Whether the unexpected signal caused me to start, or whether a smile passed across my face as the oddity of the whole adventure rose more forcibly than ever into view, I cannot say; but my companion observing something in my manner different from the tones which had previously characterised it, said with great good-humour, "You perceive that we conduct our establishment strictly upon military principles. Every thing is done here by sound of bugle. There is réveille at sunrise, and tattoo at night—the first to summon the servants to their work, the second to give notice that the gates are about to shut; and he who is not at his post whenever he may be needed, runs no slight risk of immediate dismissal. Besides, every man has his own particular call, pensioners as well as domestics, by sounding which he may be brought home from any point within the circumference of a mile; and all are required to pay to such signals the most implicit obedience. You may depend upon it, that no association voluntarily entered into can be held pleasantly together, except by the strictest attention to standing rules; and in our case these have been framed with an undeviating regard to regularity and decorum."

We had arrived by this time at the gate of the Hospital, near which several persons were lounging, in attitudes sufficiently indicative of the listlessness which usually takes possession of a man immediately previous to the announcement of dinner. Between them and my conductor a few brief words of recognition passed; but we made no pause, till, having ascended the staircase, I was ushered into his private apartment. It was neatly though not expensively furnished, with a due proportion of chairs, tables, and sofas, and the walls were surrounded by a variety of military plates, descriptive of most of the actions fought in India, or during the first American war. Over the chimneypiece were suspended two or three swords of different shapes and constructions, a brace of pistols, a gorget, sash, and short rifle—whilst the corners were furnished with walking-sticks,

fishing-rods, landing-nets, and other implements of sporting. All these things I had abundant opportunity to examine, for my own toilet necessarily occupied very little, whilst that of my guide occupied a great deal of time; but both the one and the other being completed at last, the second horn sounded, and we descended to the banqueting-room.

If the reader has ever chanced to dine at the mess of a united and well-ordered regiment, he will not stand in need of any elaborate description on my part, in order to bring before his mind's eye a tolerably accurate representation of the scene which was there presented. In the centre of a room of moderate dimensions, furnished much after the fashion of a private gentleman's dining-room, stood a table, well supplied with viands, and arranged, as it appeared, for the reception of fourteen persons. On a sideboard, which occupied a niche at the lower end, was laid out a handsome but not an extravagant supply of plate, every article of which shone as if just passed out of the hands of the maker; whilst round the walls were suspended likenesses of Wolfe, Cornwallis, Abercrombie, Stuart, Wellington, and other heroes of ancient and modern times. Grouping about the window were some half-dozen individuals, whose expressions of cordial satisfaction at the arrival of my host, indicated their readiness to commence the attack upon the provender before them; whilst the servants remained erect and soldier-like, in a row, prepared to obey such orders as might from time to time be issued. Of all this I was enabled to take notice, whilst advancing from the door towards the board; but no time was granted for more minute examination, for, the president having reached his chair, the company sat down, and the business of dinner began.

It is hardly necessary to observe, that, even at this important moment, curiosity was not so far asleep as to hinder me from stealing an occasional glance at the remarkable group into the midst of which I was thrown. At the head of the table sat Major Cohorn, the gentleman to whose hospitality I was indebted for my present enviable position, and of whose personal appearance as much has been told already, as the reader may, perhaps, desire to learn. He was the

ame upright, soldier-looking person at the dinner-table s at the river's side,—his outward man being, however, so ar improved, that, in lieu of the fustian jacket and trowsers which adorned it during the morning, he was now arrayed in a blue coat with scarlet collar and cuffs, white small-clothes, and large military boots. On his left hand (I myself occupying the post of honour on his right) was placed Brevet Major Chakot, presenting a remarkable contrast to the rugged veteran, both in manner and appearance. He was a soldier of the modern school, fashionably attired, with no very striking peculiarity about him, unless the loss of an arm deserves to be so accounted; and this, as the president gave me to understand, was his first appearance as a resident among them. Next to me, on my right, sat Captain Cartridge, a weather-beaten, sallow-visaged personage, whose pet phrases, and predilection for high-seasoned dishes, gave testimony that his services had lain chiefly in the East. His costume was in perfect keeping with the line of his conversation, being arranged solely with a view to personal comfort, not unaccompanied with neatness. Captain Cartridge was confronted by a hard-featured individual, made known to me under the appellation of Lieutenant Pivot, whose stiff and somewhat awkward manner pointed him out as one who, at one time or other, had filled the important office of Adjutant. Where he had principally served, it was not very easy to determine, though from his frequent allusion to the superiority of yams over potatoes, and the luxury of iced spruce in a warm climate, I put him down as a campaigner in the West Indies. But there was no mistaking the battle-ground of the gentleman who succeeded him. Captain Section spoke much of Mount Vesuvius, Palermo, St. Euphemia, and Sir John Stuart; from which I was at no loss in conjecturing, that he had served in the Mediterranean, and had probably taken part in the battle of Maida. Then again, there was Major Blunt, to whom pyramids and sandy deserts, and Alexandria, and the bay of Aboukir, furnished ample food for conversation; Captain Sharp, who spoke of sand-hills, and sea-dykes, canals, and treck-shots;

—and Lieutenant Martingale, who delighted in Mo Corner, Catabaw fords, Blackstocks, and Cowpens.

The scenes of these gentlemen's services, it require great depth of penetration to detect; and as to the the words Coimbra, Rodrigo, Vittoria, Torres Ved heard from time to time over the buzz of many voi bespoke them all as heroes of the Peninsula, and follo of the Great Captain. It is worthy of remark, that I the only individual at table who retained all his limb rather members, perfect. Some had lost arms,—on two, legs,—others were blind of an eye,—and several, cluding the president, were placed *hors du combat* stiffened joints, — yet all were cheerful and conten affording the fullest confirmation of Major Cohorn's vious assertion, that a pleasanter set of fellows never se their King, nor bled for their Country.

Having said so much respecting the individuals composed the party, it will not be necessary to give minute account of the conversation which took place du dinner. It was, in every respect, such as might have b anticipated—in the main exceedingly military, tho occasionally intermixed with other topics. This lasted only as long as the cloth remained, but for some t afterwards, no interruption being offered, except such arose from the occasional passing of the bottle. But degrees silence began to prevail; and then the Presid after calling to order, by knocking thrice upon the ta filled his glass.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I have great pleasure in posing a toast, to which you, I am sure, will feel e pleasure in doing honour. I drink to our new messm Major Chakot; and may he continue an honoured Pensi of Little Chelsea, for just as long a time as shall be n conducive to his own interest and happiness."

The toast was drunk with enthusiasm, and the hon done to it duly acknowledged: after which there again silence, which the President again interrupted.

"Major Chakot," said he, "you are aware of the toms of the place, and need not therefore be told that

l, in our turns, pledged to entertain our comrades, counting some adventure which may have befallen to ourselves, or to persons of our acquaintance. Now same practice prevails here which prevails in courts- al, namely, that the junior member shall first declare inion; I call upon you, as standing in that light, to a example to your messmates, by relating whatever or narrative may occur to you, in connexion with own military service."

e President's address was followed by a burst of sal approbation, which soon subsided into silent ion; and Major Chakot, after duly apologizing for m want of talent, began the following history of

THE GENTLE RECRUIT.

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THE GENTLE RECRUIT.

CHAPTER I.

I THINK it was somewhere about the middle of January 1810, when the —— regiment occupied the barracks at Braeburn Lees, that the sergeant of the day made his appearance one morning in my quarters, to announce that a young man was waiting in the orderly room for the purpose of being enlisted. As I happened at the moment to be in temporary command of the battalion, and knew that it was kept at home only till its establishment should be complete, you will readily believe that I received this communication with considerable satisfaction, which was the more lively because of the sergeant's reiterated assurances, that to the person and qualifications of the recruit no objection would be offered.

"He is as clever a lad," said the orderly, "as ever placed himself under the King's standard,—tall, erect, well-built, and quite genteel,—indeed he looks as if he had been drilled a year or so already; and will, unless appearances be very deceitful, make an extremely smart soldier."

That the sergeant had not overrated the personal qualities of the volunteer, a single glance sufficed to convince me. When I entered the orderly room, I beheld before me a youth, apparently not more than eighteen or nineteen years of age, whose appearance, manner, and general address, differed totally from those of the class of

persons from among whom the ranks of our army are usually filled up. His features were not merely regular, but beautiful; his figure, tall and slender, but admirably proportioned, seemed a very model of grace and manly elegance, and his air was that of a person accustomed to mix in the best society, if not as a superior, at all events as an equal. His dress too, though manifestly a disguise, betrayed here and there those trifling attentions to neatness, of which the common people seldom dream. A shabby frock coat, for example, was buttoned over a shirt made of the finest linen, and exceedingly white; a pair of kid gloves covered his small delicate hands; and his boots were thin, light, and well-made, — like those worn, not by agricultural labourers or journeymen artisans, but by gentlemen:—It was impossible, indeed, to examine his entire bearing without coming at once to the conclusion, that he had seen better days, and that to the step which he was about to take, he was impelled by circumstances of no common urgency.

This conviction no sooner flashed across my mind, than the eagerness with which I had resolved to accept of the proffer of his services vanished. It seemed to me, that possibly the youth might have fled from school or college in disguise; that his friends or guardians might, at this very moment, be making a search after him; and hence, that to indulge his whim might involve not himself only, but others, in lasting misery. I accordingly determined to inquire a little into his circumstances, previous to my examination of him as a recruit; and believing that he would be more easily persuaded to speak out were there no third party present at the conference, I ordered the sergeant to withdraw.

It very soon appeared, that for such a proceeding on my part the young man had not been unprepared. He smiled bitterly as the sergeant closed the door, and, drawing himself up to his full height, stood like one ready to answer no more interrogatories than his own judgment might dictate. Nor did the attitude belie his behaviour: to all my questions, as to whence he came, where he was born, who were his connexions, why had he chosen the

life of a soldier, &c., he replied in one strain, and in one only; in other words, he either gave no answer at all, or his answers were entirely without point. It was of little consequence to any one, he said, who he was; he came from a remote county, and was not disreputably connected; but where that county lay, or who those connexions were, he declined to state; in a word, events over which he possessed no control, had rendered him an alien to his family,—he was a solitary being on the face of the earth, and he had determined to enlist, because he knew no other means of earning a subsistence; at all events, none which his feelings would permit him to adopt.

On my continuing to press upon him the necessity of mature deliberation, before he took a step so decided and irrecoverable; he replied firmly, but without any thing of insolence in his tone, that his mind had long been made up, and that if I refused to receive him, he must proceed to the next military station, where he made little doubt that the officer would prove less scrupulous. Finding him in this frame of mind, and seeing that the die was cast, I no longer objected to comply with his wishes; I gave him the shilling—he was examined by the surgeon, and being sworn in, he took his place on the left flank of the line, under the name of John Jackson.

You will readily believe that the peculiarity of the circumstances under which this young man entered the corps, rendered him at once an object of no common interest among all classes. That he was well-born, had received a liberal education, and was in many respects ill adapted to the station in which he had thrust himself, no one could for a moment doubt; indeed the whole tenor of his conduct was such as to force the conviction of these truths even upon the most incredulous. It is true, that in all matters of drill and duty he was exceedingly attentive; that on parade the most penetrating eye could detect no blot in his appointments, nor awkwardness in his positions; and that he executed his movements not merely with alertness, but, as it seemed, with enthusiastic alacrity. In like manner, his deportment towards his superiors was uniformly correct. Every mark of deference to which their rank

entitled them, he scrupulously bestowed; nor was it possible for the most fastidious, in this respect at least, to find fault with him; yet there was on all such occasions an air of reserve or *hauteur* about him, of which he was either wholly unconscious, or which he attempted not to suppress.

In touching his cap to an officer, for example, or in addressing a sergeant on some point of duty, Jackson always contrived to make the individual saluted aware, that the salute was granted, not to his person, but to his office; whilst in that readiness to ingratiate himself into the good graces of those set over him, which in most cases distinguishes the young soldier, he was totally wanting. So far, indeed, was he from courting notice, that he sedulously shunned it, never voluntarily coming in the way even of his commanding officer, lest he might be required to perform some office, or execute some commission, not strictly within the line of military duty.

If such was the line of Jackson's conduct towards his superiors, you will not be surprised to learn, that among his fellow-privates he appeared still more reserved and more haughty. Of rudeness or open incivility, in the strict sense of these terms, it is true that he could not be fairly accused; that is to say, he readily answered the salutations of such as spoke to him, and never refused to do any an act of kindness as often as an opportunity offered; but he shunned the society of his fellow-soldiers generally, as far as it was practicable so to do, and made a friend and associate of none.

Every one who knows of what materials the generality of British regiments are composed, will understand, that a character such as I have just described is not very likely to be a favourite in his corps. The privates, seeing all their efforts to insinuate themselves into his good graces fail, soon began to entertain for Jackson an extreme aversion. The idea that he was by birth a gentleman, which had operated for a short time in his favour, was now entertained as an adequate reason why he should be made the subject of personal hostility; and the nickname of "Gentle Jackson," which had at first been bestowed upon him in pity, was soon employed as an epithet of derision. Rude jokes were practised at his expense. His privacy

was wantonly and continually broken in upon; his air, manner of walking, and form of speech were mimicked, and the most ribald conversation was invariably broached as often as he came within hearing. Even the non-commissioned officers were not backward in their efforts to annoy,—or, as they chose to term it, to humble the pride of this fine gentleman.

All this the young gentleman bore with extraordinary equanimity and endurance. Of the rude speeches of his comrades he took no notice. When he saw himself dogged or watched, he would retire to his quarters; and the attempts at mimickry in which those about him indulged, he either did not understand, or he despised them. So it was in his dealings with the non-commissioned officers. He performed his tasks with so much diligence, and was always so exact, that the opportunities presented to them of venting their spleen were rare; and when they did vent it in oaths or execrations, he made as if he heard them not. Once, and only once, he ventured to remonstrate against the injustice of their proceedings. Having been ordered on fatigue, when the duty to be discharged happened to be peculiarly disgusting, he reminded the sergeant who gave the order, that he had taken his turn only the day before, and that, though he certainly would not refuse to do as he was desired, the petty tyrant might rely upon a statement of the case being laid before the commanding officer.

Jackson's threat was not thrown away upon the individual to whom it was addressed. The young man escaped an office of which he could not think without loathing; but he made Sergeant Tompkins from that time forth his implacable enemy.

I am sorry to say that it is not among the privates and non-commissioned officers only, that a gentleman in the ranks is apt to be regarded with an eye of disfavour. The habits of military discipline are far from being in accordance with the turn of mind which leads a man in authority to look with forbearance upon the absence of servility in his inferiors; indeed, where there is not servility, absolute—unmitigated servility, in the general manner of a private soldier, *some reason, the reverse* of favourable to the person

affected, rarely fails to be discovered. The soldier who is not ready to fly at the beck of his officer—who appears not to covet the honour of serving him in any capacity and under any circumstances, may too often lay his account with being put down as a sulky and ill-conditioned scoundrel; and however meritorious his conduct may be in matters purely professional, that will hardly make amends for a fault, by which the personal vanity of a superior is wounded. Far be it from me to insinuate that this is always the case; I only affirm that it occurs too frequently and that it is almost unavoidably occasioned by the nature of those distinctions which military discipline engenders. Be this however as it may, one thing is quite certain, that in the case of Jackson, this disposition began gradually to show itself; and that of those who either did feel, or pretended to feel, for his situation when he enlisted, several, before the first month of his service expired, viewed him with distaste.

"An extremely saucy fellow that gentle recruit of ours," said one. "He will go a mile out of his way at any time to avoid saluting an officer; and when he cannot escape that degradation, one might fancy that he was receiving a mark of recognition from a superior."

"The scoundrel looks always as if he considered himself made of different clay from those about him," said another. "What business has such a fine gentleman in the ranks?"

"I am continually receiving complaints of his ill-humour and pride," remarked the adjutant; "but the fellow is a clean and orderly soldier too; and though they speak against him often enough in general terms, no one seems able or willing to condescend upon particulars."

Thus were men's minds gradually alienated from a youth to whose charge, as the adjutant justly said, no definite accusation could be laid; till at last there appeared something like a positive wish to catch the offensive individual tripping. Jackson, however, appeared not more proud than cautious. He was scrupulously attentive to every duty; nor was it till after his patience had been tried beyond the power of human endurance, that the shadow of *an accusation* could be brought against him.

CHAPTER II.

I HAVE said that Jackson, by venturing to remonstrate against an unjust exercise of power on the part of a sergeant, incurred the fullest extent of that person's implacable hostility. It unfortunately happened that Sergeant Tompkins, the irritated official, was pay-sergeant of the company to which Jackson belonged; and of the influence which the pay-sergeant possesses with the captain or officer in command, all who know any thing of the customs of the service must be aware. The whole of that influence was, on the present occasion, exerted to impress Jackson's captain with an unfavourable opinion of the recruit. A thousand groundless complaints were made of him, as that he was mutinous, disorderly, unsocial, and impertinent; he was represented as an artful and dangerous hypocrite—one who took every opportunity of poisoning the minds of his comrades, at the same time that he affected to keep aloof from them—and of whom no good could possibly be expected, till his proud spirit should have been thoroughly broken.

Captain Fletcher, the individual to whom these reports were carried, chanced to belong to that class of persons whom I have already represented as acknowledging no tolerance for any thing like an independent spirit in an inferior. He it was, indeed, who first took notice of the stiff and formal manner in which Jackson saluted,—a matter which he dwelt on with the greater bitterness, in consequence of a personal slight which he believed himself to have suffered at the hands of the young soldier. Having been pleased with the cleanliness and orderly behaviour of the recruit on duty, Captain Fletcher had communicated to Jackson his desire to employ him as a servant, making the communication with the condescending air of a superior, who confers some prodigious benefit upon a dependent. To his extreme surprise and indignation, Jackson declined the proposed patronage, in a manner which left no doubt

on the captain's mind, that he had felt the offer not as an honour but as an insult. Captain Fletcher could not forget that circumstance: it rankled in his mind like a canker in a wounded limb, and he scarcely took the trouble to disguise the vehement desire of finding a fitting opportunity to chastise the scoundrel for his insolence.

It is hardly necessary to say that Jackson, thus situated, soon began to feel that in embracing the honourable profession of arms as a private soldier, he had committed a great and fatal error. He was still the neatest and most intelligent man on parade, yet the morning and evening never passed without his being compelled to submit to reproaches which he was conscious that he did not merit, whilst his hours in quarters became, before long, such as even he, patient as he was, could with difficulty endure. Hitherto the attacks made upon him were merely those of speech and gesture; now, however, that he was known to hold a mean place in his captain's favour, practical jokes were indulged in: his accoutrements were no sooner cleaned, and placed in order for inspection, than some accident or other befel them; and he was compelled to go through the whole process of pipeclay and blackball, over and over again. This occurred repeatedly, without his being able to fix the blame upon any individual; and he knew the temper of those about him too well to complain of all or any in general terms. But an opportunity presented itself at last of bringing the matter home to the guilty, and Jackson only failed in taking adequate advantage of it, through a sudden impulse of passion which he had ample reason afterwards to lament. Jackson, who had been ordered for guard over-night, paid, as is customary, more than usual attention to the furbishing of his accoutrements. This done, the young man placed them all in their proper situations, and strolled out into the field behind the barrack-yard, for the purpose of whiling away the time till tattoo.

Whether he had overheard some plot among his comrades, or suspected from other causes that there was a disposition to do him wrong, I cannot say; but he had not sat many minutes in his favourite corner, before he experienced an irresistible inclination to return. He obeyed it, and enter-

ing the barrack-room, beheld a spectacle which stirred up his choler beyond the control of reason. Five or six persons, among whom Sergeant Tompkins stood conspicuous, were in the act of effacing every trace of his evening's industry. His belts were already stained with grease-spots, his pouch was dimmed and defiled, and his firelock itself had not escaped the polluting touch of these miscreants. Jackson's temper, which had stood many previous trials, gave way at last. He sprang forward, and confronting the sergeant, while in the act of putting a finishing hand to his unworthy operations, struck him to the ground with one blow of his fist.

All was now confusion and uproar. The sergeant rising from the floor, called upon those near to assist in arresting a criminal, who by this act of desperate mutiny, had incurred the severest penalties of martial law; whilst Jackson, worked up to a pitch of absolute frenzy, dared any man to lay upon him so much as a finger. For a moment, the soldiers hung back,—for there was a wildness and desperation in the young man's eye, which bespoke him utterly reckless of consequences; but it was only for a moment. They rushed in upon him—he made a grasp at his bayonet, but failed in securing it; and then, after a fruitless struggle, which lasted scarcely a second, he was borne to the earth.

In the meanwhile news reached the mess-room, that there was a tumult in the men's apartment. The captain of the day, who as fortune would have it was no other than Fletcher, rushed to the spot, where he arrived just as the men of his company had secured the hands of Jackson, and were preparing to drag him before the commanding officer.

"Captain Fletcher," exclaimed the desperate man, speaking with great rapidity, and under the influence of violent excitement, "I demand justice even from you. Look here, sir! Is it thus that I ought to stand, pinioned,—bound, — a prisoner? Is this the consummation of so many insults and wrongs,—insults which I have borne, God knows how patiently,—wrongs which I could not bear, yet feel myself a *man*? *I know* that you and I entertain

love for one another,—I know that I have received no marks of favour at your hands, nor you any proof of extraordinary respect from me; but if you be a gentleman, if you feel like a gentleman,—nay, nay, if you feel like a man, order these thongs to be removed. I ask no more than this. Let me be free, that is all, and leave the rest to myself."

Even Fletcher was visibly struck by the energy of the young man's manner, and with a degree of consideration hardly to be expected from him, desired to be made acquainted with the cause of the disturbance. God help the luckless wretch who, in any situation of life, stands singly opposed to a crowd; but doubly is he to be pitied, who, whatever the cause of the quarrel may be, fills the humble station of a private soldier, and incurs the hostility of his comrades. Not one voice, but fifty exclaimed aloud, that Jackson had struck the sergeant. The sergeant himself stepped forward, exhibiting, in an eyebrow swollen and discoloured, corroborating proofs that this serious accusation was well grounded, and Captain Fletcher became in an instant satisfied that one course, and one only, was left for him to pursue. It mattered not a straw of what nature the provocation given might be. To raise a hand against a superior, however slight the difference in rank, is a crime, which, if committed by one under martial law, is necessarily rated at the highest; nor are there any circumstances which, by the administrators of that most rigid of all codes, can be received as a justification. Captain Fletcher's duty was imperative. He ordered the culprit to be conveyed without delay to the black hole, there to be kept in close custody against the day of trial; whilst he himself departed, to make a report of the whole transaction in the proper quarter.

It would be no easy matter to account for the change of manner and temperament which exhibited itself, as soon as these directions were given, in the person of Jackson. His fury, which but a minute ago fell little short of madness, suddenly subsided, and in its room came no unmanly weakness, but a cold and contemptuous disdain, as if he *felt how absolutely* desperate was the plight into which he

had rushed, yet set its worst consequences at defiance. Without uttering a syllable of complaint, far less of justification, he calmly and deliberately prepared to follow his conductors; and he smiled with a bitterness which caused his enemy to quail beneath it, upon the sergeant, as he passed.

There is something in the sight of a man beset with dangers or misfortunes, who bears himself well under his trials, which the most unfeeling and despotic cannot contemplate without involuntary respect. Seldom has this truth been more forcibly illustrated than it was on the present occasion. The very persons who, but a moment before, had joined so cordially in working Jackson wrong—who by their clamour had consigned him to a disgraceful imprisonment, to be followed, no doubt, by a punishment still more debasing—exhibited all at once manifest symptoms that they repented of their behaviour. There was no shout of triumph as "the gentleman" was led out, nor so much as a sentence of opprobium or insult cast after him. On the contrary, whilst the majority looked in silence on the work of their own hands, there were not wanting some who condemned with open mouth the entire tenor of the affair, and expressed their indignation that a poor fellow should thus fall a victim to the ill-natured levity, to call it by no more serious name, of persons who ought to have known better.

Of these speeches, however, Jackson, if he heard them, took no more notice than he would have done of their opposites, had they been uttered. He proceeded on between a file of soldiers, who so far felt for his situation as to free his wrists, as soon as the officer's back was turned, from the manacles which had hitherto confined them; till having arrived at the black-hole, a sort of dungeon adjoining to the guard-room, the door was opened, and he was thrust in, to find what comfort he could in his own reflections.

In what manner the prisoner passed that night it is, of course, impossible for me to say, because it was spent in solitude and utter darkness; but we may well believe that it was to him a night of no little suffering. He knew enough of military matters to be aware, that he had rendered himself liable to a *destiny* against which every generous or manly *feeling revolts*; and that from that terrible punish-

ment nothing short of some fortunate accident, on the occurrence of which he was not justified in counting, could deliver him. Had it been death that awaited him, though no man can look forward to a violent death without horror, still the prospect might have been endured. There is at least nothing degrading in a capital punishment, provided it be inflicted for the breach of a law purely artificial; and the culprit who feels that from moral wrong his own conscience acquits him, may meet it without shame. But to be stripped before a crowd of spectators, tied up like a dog to the halberds, and lashed till the arms of his tormentors grow weary with the exercise,—there is something in the contemplation of such a fate which the most philosophic cannot contemplate with composure. That this horrible vision floated continually before the eyes of Jackson, there is no room to doubt; that upon a mind, constituted as his was, it worked even more than its usual effects, can as little be questioned. But whatever his internal sufferings might be, he gave no outward proof of their violence, at least none of which any report could be made by the sentinel who guarded his prison door. The only symptom of uneasiness, indeed, which he exhibited, showed itself in a restlessness which drove him to pace his prison backwards and forwards,—an exercise which he intermitted not for the space of a minute, from the moment of his arrest, till that of his unlooked-for liberation.

In the mean while there was no little commotion among the officers of the regiment, many of whom began to feel their old prepossessions in Jackson's favour return, now that he was involved in a scrape of so serious a nature. A variety of expedients were accordingly proposed, with the view of saving the unfortunate youth from the consequences of a court-martial, from which, should his case be brought before it, only one sentence could be expected; but his crime was in itself so flagrant, and to pass it by unnoticed would prove so destructive of every thing like subordination, that they were all one after another pronounced inadmissible, even by such as leaned most strongly to the side of mercy. Besides all which, the command of the corps had lately passed into the hands of one *who knew nothing* of the circumstances attending Jack-

son's enlistment, except by common report, and who, educated in a school of strict and unbending discipline, would not so much as listen to any proposition that had a violation of that principle for its object.

Directions were given to the adjutant to warn the customary number of officers for duty on the following day; and the witnesses to the prisoner's violence, as well as to the whole course of the proceedings out of which it arose, were desired to attend. But before these orders could be either acted upon or noted down, an event befel which turned the attention of all into a new channel, and procured for the recruit at least a temporary exemption from a disgrace to which he had resolved not to submit,—at all events not to survive.

We were still seated at the mess-table, and the decided steps just specified having been taken, other topics were beginning to be introduced, when an orderly dragoon was seen to ride into the yard, and direct his course towards the colonel's quarters. For some time previously, we had been made aware that our sojourn in England was not destined to be of long continuance. Through more than one indirect channel, we had heard that the order for our immediate embarkation to join Lord Wellington's army was issued; and that a few formalities only were required to be gone through previous to the arrival of the route. Under these circumstances, the dragoon no sooner made his appearance than there was a simultaneous rush towards the window, accompanied by a general conviction, that now at last the order so long expected would be received; and in these expectations fate had decreed that we should not be disappointed.

The dragoon was summoned to approach—the colonel took the packet from him; he hastily opened it, and glanced his eye over its contents with manifest satisfaction.

"Gentlemen," said he, as he again folded it up, "I congratulate both you and myself on the fulfilment of all our wishes: we are even more fortunate than the most sanguine could have anticipated; I am instructed here, that the transports destined to receive us are already assembled at Dover, and we march to-morrow morning."

A shout, loud, hearty, and lengthened, followed this

announcement. The mess was immediately dissolved; the adjutant was commanded to insert no order in the book, except that which had just arrived from the Horse Guards; and each individual set off to complete such preparations as he deemed essential to his own profit and future comfort: Jackson and his crime were alike forgotten in the excitement which the news produced, and the calling together of the court-martial was overlooked.

Nor did many minutes elapse ere the intelligence, so joyfully received in the circle of officers, made its way among the men.

I need not, however, dwell at much length upon this. Let it suffice to state, that it was not without great exertion on the part of the officers, that any thing like order was restored among the men; after which, the customary routine of inspection was hastily gone through, and the lots which determined the fate of soldiers' wives, drawn. But by this time, the increasing twilight began to render objects obscure. Every one, therefore, whether joyous or sad, retired to his quarters; and the voice of triumph and lamentation were, before long, equally heard no more.

CHAPTER III.

Whilst these things were going on, the solitude of Jackson's dungeon had been broken in upon by a messenger, who came, not indeed to set him free, but to conduct him, under an escort, to his barrack-room, that he might undergo the usual examination, and be disposed of accordingly. In him, the intelligence which so deeply affected all besides, excited no visible emotion. He followed his conductor in silence; stood in silence to undergo the scrutiny of the inspector, and being commanded to put his kit in order for marching at an early hour on the morrow, he did so without giving utterance to a remark. That done, he permitted himself to be quietly led back again to the place of his con-

ament, where he spent the remainder of the night, as he d spent its commencement, watchful, restless, and uneasy. At an early hour on the morrow, the bugle summoned to our stations, which were assumed amidst the com-ingling of joy and sorrow usual on such occasions; and e line of march being formed, the band struck up and the giment pushed forward. In rear of the column, a isoner, and surrounded by a guard, moved Jackson. His ms, which he was not permitted to carry, were borne upon e of the baggage waggons, and even his parade jacket d regimental cap were denied him. Yet neither the isguise of a prisoner's dress, nor the galling appendage of anacled wrists, could rob him of that bold and haughty r which he had on all occasions maintained. Even now deed, with every external mark of degradation about him, was impossible to behold him without a sense of involun-ary respect. Not a murmur nor complaint passed his lips. With brow erect, and eye unclouded, he stepped forward at e given signal; and he prosecuted his journey in the same lence, and apparent abstraction, which would have dis-inguished him had he filled his proper station in the olumn.

It was late in the day before we reached the point of mbarkation, and no arrangements having been made for ccommodating the troops in the town, some confusion oc-ured in hurrying them on board. In consequence of this, s well as of an intimation from the commodore, that the ind blew fair and not a moment's delay would be allowed, ore than one blunder occurred in apportioning its due are of officers to each transport, nor could any attention e paid to events not immediately connected with present ntingencies. A similar cause operated in hindering any der from being issued touching the disposal of the prisoner, o was conducted to the same vessel which the rest of his mpany occupied; and the commandant being left without thority either to try or release him, he found himself omed to continue a prisoner till the voyage should be omplished.

From this circumstance, however, it can hardly be said t Jackson suffered any serious inconvenience. As I was

myself the senior officer on board, I took care that none of the rigours of confinement should be imposed upon him; indeed he became from the moment of weighing anchor a prisoner merely in name.

We had accomplished perhaps one half of our voyage, without the occurrence of any event deserving of notice, when on a certain occasion, feeling no disposition to sleep, and being oppressed with the excessive heat and confined atmosphere of the cabin, I quitted my cot as the eight-bells were tolling, and ascended to the quarter-deck. Nothing could exceed the exquisite beauty of the scene which met me there. The moon shone with full lustre in a sky perfectly cloudless, and tinged with a long and wavering line of silver the bosom of the deep. The breeze was just sufficiently powerful to keep the canvas from flapping to the mast, and to give a direction to the tiny waves, which rose and fell like the gentle heavings of a virgin's bosom; whilst the quiet rush of waters, as the vessel's bow cut through them, was the only sound that broke in upon the silence of the night. The helmsman stood at his post, motionless as a statue, and the watch lay stretched upon the forecastle in profound sleep. I alone, indeed, of the many living beings on board, appeared to live and move, and have my senses about me; and even I soon became as still as if there had been infection in the air. I sat down upon the tafferel in a state of delicious lassitude, such as the aspect of things about me was calculated to produce; and I gazed abroad over the sea, with the eye of a happy man, who is so—he scarce knows why, and he cares not wherefore.

I was thus situated, not so much lost in thought as enjoying the blessed absence of all power of thinking, when the light step of some one approaching, as if with caution, broke in upon my revery. I turned round, and beheld Jackson standing at my side. The moonlight falling strongly upon his face at the instant, I saw that his features were agitated, as if some powerful passion were at work within, or that he had struggled hard to subdue such a passion, without having fully succeeded. Startled not more by the peculiar expression of his countenance than by the

abruptness of his approach, I involuntarily rose from my seat, and assuming an attitude almost of defence, confronted him. "Jackson," said I, speaking sharply, because without consideration, "what means this? Have you forgotten that you go at large only upon sufferance?—how is it that you break in thus rudely upon the privacy of your commanding officer?"

A bitter and painful smile curled the young man's lip as I uttered these sentences.

"No, sir," replied he, after a momentary pause, "I have not forgotten that I go at large only by sufferance. I have not forgotten that I am sunk to the lowest depth of degradation, so low indeed as to be at the mercy of ——; but no matter. I had fancied that by you, at least, I was regarded with an eye of favour. I had persuaded myself that you took some interest in the fate of a miserable outcast; and my bosom yearned towards you with a feeling which my judgment hardly approved. I did wrong in giving admission to visions so baseless, and I thank you for restoring me to my senses."

He turned round as he spoke, and was walking away, when, instantly recovering my self-possession, I entreated him to remain.

"You are not mistaken, young man," said I; "I conceived a lively interest in your fate when I first saw you, and that interest continues unabated up to the present moment. If I appeared to treat you harshly on the present occasion, be assured that the tone of my voice belied my feelings. You came upon me suddenly,—I did not dream of your being near; and I acted as most men would have done under such circumstances, by speaking without thinking."

The softened tone of my voice, not less than these few explanatory sentences, produced an instantaneous effect upon Jackson. He stopped short, and looking back towards me, I saw that his eyes swam in tears which it required no trifling exertion on his part to suppress.

"God bless you, sir!" cried he, in a subdued tone; "I had no right, humbled as I am, to expect any thing of apology or explanation from you; but the spell is broken. When I sought your presence, it was with the firm determination of

making you acquainted with every particular in my history. Under what influence I was driven to form that resolution, I cannot tell; but form it I did; and had you met me thus at first I should have poured out my whole soul before you; but the impulse has departed, and I cannot, if I would, unburthen this bursting heart of its load. At some other moment, perhaps, the spell may return; but now I have no power to speak." He retired as he concluded this sentence; and before I could interpose, either by word or gesture, to stop him, he had descended to his berth.

I need scarcely observe that this adventure, abrupt and fleeting as it was, produced upon me an effect not less lively than any in which, for a long while back, I had taken part. It was evident enough, either that the poor youth laboured under an aberration of intellect,—a supposition to the correctness of which his allusion to the power of impulses and spells gave at least the show of plausibility,—or he really was, what he professed to be, the child of a wayward destiny. In either case, he could not fail to be an object of sincere commiseration to every considerate mind; more particularly when regarded in connexion with the unhappy scrape into which he had drawn himself. It was with no ordinary violence that I blamed my own want of self-possession, which caused me to check a disposition on the boy's part to speak out; nor could all the continued beauty of the night scene, though aided by my own most strenuous exertions, restore my equanimity. After pacing the quarter-deck, therefore, for some time, not without a faint hope that he might even yet return, I determined to think no more, either of the past or the future, but to leave every thing to chance.

It was but natural, excited as my curiosity and, let me add, my sympathy had been, that I should from that time forth lay myself out for every opportunity of again conversing with Jackson. With this view, I repeatedly kept the deck at hours, both of the night and day, when my companions had deserted it; and more than once threw myself in the young man's way, so as that he could not possibly mistake my meaning. *Day after* day, however, stole on, and he persisted in *the silence which* he had hitherto maintained. It seemed, *indeed, that he* was really the puppet of an influence over

which he possessed no control whatever—or rather, that his actions sprang not, like those of other men, from volition, but from fatality; for though he had held out a sort of promise that the time of disclosure might yet come, the fulfilment of that promise appeared not to depend upon his own choice. Not that he resumed the air of cold civility, with which he had formerly treated me not less than others: on the contrary, his salutes were now given with kindness; and more than once he lingered beside me, as if struggling with an inclination which he could not overcome; but the subject on which, above all others, I was most anxious to be instructed, he sedulously avoided, never failing to walk away as often as I referred to it. This line of conduct on his part, though it had no effect in doing away with the sympathy which had been so strongly excited in his favour, taught me to adopt a less unequivocal manner of showing it. I gradually ceased to court his presence, and returned to the habits and mode of acting which I had previously pursued.

To this system I pertinaciously adhered, no change being wrought in consequence of it in the conduct or manner of the recruit, till the joyful cry of "Land on the lee bow!" gave notice that our voyage was drawing fast to its conclusion. The land in question proved to be Cape Ortegal, the bold and precipitous ridge of which rises like a pillar out of the waters, and is seen for some time before any of the coast adjacent becomes visible. But the breeze still favouring us, as it had done for the last three days, other and no less attractive objects were speedily discerned, and our voyage henceforth lay along a sea-coast, fertile as the most ardent admirer of the picturesque need desire, in interesting prospects. We continued to coast along, till the Tagus itself lay before us; nor did we drop anchor till a late hour on the 15th of July, about half a mile from the fortress of Belem.

Now, then, my military career was begun. Now, at length, was I about to set foot upon the land of promise to every British soldier,—the scene where if laurels were to be gathered at all, they could not fail to be found; and the ideas which rose out of that recollection were at once too *vivid, and too complicated,* to permit a thought of sleep, *during many hours, to* obtrude itself. At last, however,

Nature began to raise her voice against a further indulgence in such speculations. All the whispers of romance failed in keeping drowsiness at bay; and I made ready, about one o'clock in the morning, to follow the example of my comrades, by descending to the cabin.

I had quitted my favourite station on the poop, and was proceeding towards the companion, when there suddenly stood before me the figure of a man whom, in spite of the almost pitchy darkness (for the moon had not yet risen), I had no difficulty in recognising as Jackson. His air was that of a person labouring under excessive agitation, and he held a packet in his hand, which he presented to me in a hurried and abrupt manner. "We land to-morrow," said he, speaking in a deep and stifled tone; "and the opportunity which I have sought, God knows how eagerly, will not now be granted. But though I have no power to speak, my mind has been free, and I have written the chief details of my unfortunate story; take it—read it, when a convenient opportunity offers; but remember, as you value your own peace, communicate its contents to no one. Whatever my fate may be, keep the secret inviolable;—betray it, were it even to save my life, and the same destiny which has governed me, will rule over you."

He thrust the packet into my hand as he spoke, and before I could so far command myself as to answer him, he had disappeared. I was now quite convinced that the poor youth's mind was unhinged. I put his manuscript into my pocket, hardly caring whether the opportunity to which he alluded would ever arrive or not; and, pursuing my original intention, descended the ladder and went to bed.

CHAPTER IV.

THE first gray of the morning of the 16th of July, 1810, *was just beginning* to appear, when the report of an eighteen-*pounder from the* flag-ship in the Tagus, gave notice that *the hour of dis*embarkation had arrived; and long before

the sun had attained any height in the heavens, the regiment was formed in column of companies along the beach.

It was but natural to suppose that at least a day or two would be granted previous to the commencement of our march up the country, for the double purpose of refreshing the men, enfeebled by a fortnight's confinement, and enabling the officers to provide mules and other animals for the transport of their baggage.

I need scarcely remind you, that Massena was, at the period I have referred to, hanging upon the frontier with an army of 70,000 men; that Ciudad Rodrigo was in a state of close siege; that the British general, with little more than 25,000 British, and about as many half-disciplined Portuguese, could bring no relief to the garrison, being hardly competent to maintain his defensive position upon the Coa. Under these circumstances, the arrival of a fresh battalion was to him a matter of the first moment; and hence every corps which landed was hurried forward into the interior, as rapidly as the strength of the men, and the movements of pressed bullocks, would allow.

Like other regiments which had lately arrived, we were met upon the beach by a peremptory order to pass at once through the capital into the interior, intimation being at the same time conveyed, that such accommodation as the country could afford, and we were likely to need, had already been provided; and by dint of extraordinary exertions, we contrived to come up with the division to which we were attached about noon on the 22nd,—having accomplished a march of upwards of one hundred and fifty miles in something less than seven entire days.

We found the division occupying a line considerably in advance of the main army, with its left resting upon Almeida, its right upon a bend in the Coa, and covered in its rear by the channel of the same river. The outposts, however, extended as far as certain scattered hamlets, half way between Almeida and Villamula; and the state of preparation in which both men and horses were kept, indicated that an attack was hourly expected. As we arrived not in the best order imaginable, the men being foot-sore to the last degree, and the officers sadly distressed for want of baggage the general, with the consideration for which he was remar

able throughout the army, appointed us to a station better sheltered than that occupied by any other battalion under his command. We took possession of a few cottages not far from a bridge which connected the opposite banks of the river with one another, where we were given to understand, that for some days at least no service on outpost, nor any other harassing duty, would be required at our hands.

In the mean time Jackson, so far from deriving any advantage from the debarkation, had only returned, in consequence of it, to the condition of a close prisoner. Several fresh attempts were indeed made to obtain for him a free pardon, partly in consequence of the extreme provocation which had led to the commission of his crime, and partly because of the length of time which had seen him in confinement. But our commanding officer, as I have already stated, was one of those who cannot disunite the ideas of manly clemency and blamable imbecility. A rigid disciplinarian, he would allow no circumstances to stand as an excuse for a breach of the great and fundamental law of subordination; and though punishment might be deferred, it never failed, sooner or later, to overtake the individual who, being under his command and in his power, set that law at defiance.

Poor Jackson was doomed to become one in addition to many who received this stern justice at his hands. The remainder of the 22nd being granted to see after our own and our men's comforts, a regimental court-martial was ordered to assemble on the morrow; and, as bad luck would have it, (for, under all circumstances, I could not but consider the coincidence as unfortunate,) of the court in question, I was nominated president.

At the appointed hour of noon, the court, consisting of four young subalterns, with myself, not at that time a very old man, assembled. We met together in a ruinous shed, one portion of which was set apart as a place of confinement to the disorderly; and the prisoner being summoned, as well as the witnesses against him, the customary oaths were taken, and the process began. There is no denying that a clearer case of mutiny was never brought before the cognizance of a military tribunal. A blow was inflicted by a private sentinel upon his officer,—to the

fact twenty persons were prepared to swear; and though the previous provocations were admitted to have been both numerous and galling, these could not for a moment be received as more than a slight extenuation of so serious a crime. Even the prisoner himself attempted no denial, nor offered any excuse for his conduct. When called upon to make his defence, he answered only with a brief declaration, that his case needed no apology, for that he had acted upon an impulse which would have driven any other person so situated to a similar course. This was said in a tone of voice as calm and firm as if he had been speaking of matters the issue of which could not affect him very deeply; and it was all that, by repeated questions, I succeeded in wringing from him. The court having listened to him patiently, and, I must confess, not without a considerable share of commiseration, commanded him to withdraw; when, each member being separately required to give judgment, all, one after another, pronounced him—Guilty. Finally, the severest sentence which it was in the power of a regimental court-martial to award, was awarded against him; and he was condemned to receive, at such time and place as the commanding officer should appoint, a punishment of three hundred lashes on his bare back.

Greatly as I felt shocked when this tremendous sentence was pronounced, it was impossible for me, upon any grounds of injustice or cruelty, to lift up my voice against it. My brother officers would have failed in their duty, had they permitted any consideration foreign from the circumstances of the case, as it appeared in evidence before them, to warp their judgment, or direct their finding; and I, as president, should have been equally wanting in mine, had I interfered with the exercise of their legitimate powers, or influenced their decision. Yet it was not without a pang of deep and heartfelt sorrow that I listened to their verdict, and proceeded, as my office required, to record it. Record it, however, I did, without betraying more of outward concern than was exhibited by the rest; and then there remained *but one* measure to pursue, which we all *heartily united in adopting*. A recommendation to mercy,

expressed in the most forcible terms, was appended to the sentence of condemnation; and something like a hope was excited, that it might prove not wholly useless.

Armed with this important document, and carefully studying, as I went along, every argument which I thought at all likely to affect his mind, I hurried off to the colonel's quarters, whom I found engaged, apparently in earnest conversation, with Captain Fletcher. This was an omen so unfavourable, that in spite of my best exertions to prevent it, I found much of the confidence which had animated me by the way, evaporate; yet I determined to show myself not less the strenuous advocate of a youth who appeared to possess no friend in the regiment except myself. My business was no sooner made known, than Captain Fletcher rose to withdraw. God knows,—perhaps I do them wrong,—but I fancied then, and I fancy now, that he threw a significant look over his shoulder, just as he was quitting the apartment, and that it was answered by a look not less significant from the colonel; and the ideas to which the suspicion gave rise, were not very favourable to freedom of speech. Nevertheless, I performed my task, if not as eloquently as I intended, at all events forcibly and strenuously, though, as it very soon appeared, to little purpose.

"You have a perfect right, Captain Chakot," said the colonel, "to lay before me both the sentence and the recommendation of the court; nor do I blame you for using your best eloquence in the prisoner's favour. But it remains for me to decide how far clemency can be here judiciously exercised; and you may rest satisfied that, in coming to that decision, I shall be guided entirely by my own sense of propriety."

He bowed as he uttered these words; and, taking the hint as it was intended to be taken, I withdrew, leaving behind me every ray of hope that poor Jackson would escape degradation. I was not deceived in this painful foreboding: in an hour or two after, the sergeant of the day brought the orderly book, as usual, to my quarters; I hastily opened it, and the first announcement which met my eye, was this: "The regiment will parade to-morrow

morning at seven o'clock, in heavy marching order, to witness the sentence of a regimental court-martial carried into execution."

I shut the book in indescribable disgust, and feeling incapable of supporting any society, even that of my brother officers, I walked into the open air, without knowing or caring where chance might lead me.

I wandered on for some time, in a state of high and painful excitement, cursing sometimes the extreme severity of my commander's temper, sometimes the bad-heartedness of Fletcher, and not less often the rashness of the young recruit; when suddenly, and almost for the first time since he put it into my hand, the recollection of Jackson's packet occurred to me. Blaming myself, I hardly knew why, for my inattention, I thrust my hand into my pocket, and there, sure enough, it was, just as I had received it on board of ship.

There could not be a more convenient opportunity for the perusal of a narrative concerning the nature of which I had already pretty well made up my mind; so sitting down under an ash, I broke the seal, and began it. As I have faithfully preserved it, and have it still about me, I think it better to read the whole than make any attempt to detail its substance; for though the latter might serve very well the purpose of my present narrative, it could not convey to you any idea of the character or disposition of the writer.

JACKSON'S NARRATIVE.

"By what secret and irresistible influence I am impelled to make a confidant of you, I know not. It is true, that from the moment when we first met, you have appeared to feel an interest in my favour; nor have I forgotten the kind and generous manner in which you warned me of the consequences of the rash step which I was about to take; neither has your marked delicacy of conduct, since I came as a prisoner immediately under your command, escaped my observation. But these things furnish no rational reason why I should disclose my shame to you; they

would rather lead me, were I master of my own actions, to conceal it. I am not, however, master of my own actions. There is a curse upon me—a terrible and deadly curse, which operates at all moments of my sleeping and waking existence,—which reduced me to what I am—a common soldier,—which has driven me to the commission of a crime, bringing a debasing punishment in its train,—which compels me, in spite of strenuous exertions to the contrary, to stand forward as a witness against myself, and which will never cease to work upon my heart, and to shape out the tenour of my movements, till that heart cease to beat, and these limbs be incapable of motion.

"I am the son, the only son, nay the only child of a gentleman of proud lineage and considerable fortune, in the north of England. His name it would little interest you to be told; and doomed as I am to be the publisher of my own disgrace, I will not bring disgrace upon others by repeating it. Let it suffice to mention, that the estate to which I was once heir, came into the family at the Conquest, and that it has descended in lineal succession, from father to son, from its first possessor to him,—who does not now hold it.

"Of the manner in which my early years were spent, I entertain but a vague and indistinct recollection. I remember something, indeed, of a lovely and amiable woman, to whom I was taught by those about me to look as my mother. I remember, or rather I fancy that I remember, how she used to take me on her knee, and cover my cheek with kisses, whilst tears rolled down her own; and either memory, or the report of others,—when heard, or where repeated, I know not,—presents me with an occasional picture of the same beautiful woman, pining like one broken-hearted, and fading in her youth. Observe, that I do not assert these things as facts; they may be mere illusions of my own disordered fancy; in all probability they are so; yet to me they are at this moment as clear and palpable as the scene of my own arrest on a recent occasion, or our late conference on the quarter-deck. Whether they be realities or dreams, is, however, a matter of no moment. My mother died long before I had attained sufficient age to value her good qua-

lities, or to miss her attentions; and I was left, when little more than an infant, to the care of my father.

"I know not how to trust myself in drawing a picture of the only parent whom I have ever known. That he was kind in his manner towards me, I cannot venture to say; at least his kindness was not so displayed as to win upon the attachment of a boy naturally warm-hearted, or to make me forget that I had sometimes seen my mother weep, when he and she and I were alone together. It is true that few days passed, few at least during which he was disengaged, without my seeing him. Occasionally, too, he would bring me a toy; and when I was old enough to ride, he gave me a pony, on which I was permitted to scamper wherever I chose, provided only I returned home before dark. Yet was his manner uniformly cold and austere; I cannot recal to my recollection so much as one kiss from his lips; and as to a 'God bless you!'—the expression never escaped him. No, no, no! it was not in blessing that he took the name of God in his mouth;—it was for a far more tremendous and more certain purpose.

"At an age as early as is usual in like cases, I was sent to a preparatory school, from whence I was in due time removed to Eton. Here, in the society of lads of my own standing, several happy years were spent, so happy, indeed, that the impression which they have left upon my mind can be erased only by death. Strange to say, however, the vacations, which brought to others so many anticipations of delight, were always hailed by me with sorrow. I had no home, that is to say, no home which I loved; for though I delighted in field sports, and the means of gratifying that propensity were abundantly within my reach, there was something in the air of ——— which invariably chilled me when I drew near it. The truth is, that I did not, and could not love my father. I feared him; he was a man to be feared:—cold, austere, formal; proud of his family, equally proud of his own attainments; of a temper not irritable, in the ordinary acceptation of that term, yet easily offended, and ignorant how to forgive: such a man even his own son could not love, however much he might reverence, or rather dread him. Besides, my father was one of those

whom no arguments, no entreaties, no motives, even of self-interest, could divert from the course which he had once made up his mind to pursue. Let him set his heart upon any object, and the whole world, were it offered in exchange, could not purchase his relinquishment of that object; difficulties, should such occur, only served to goad him to further exertions. Nor was it in essentials only that this unbending temperament displayed itself; it reached even to the most minute details of domestic life; it operated even in his distribution of his own time, and had full influence over my proceedings, which dared not take a direction in the slightest degree at variance from the channel which he had marked out for them. Between my father and myself there was not so much as the pretence of confidence. He never consulted me in any thing, whether relating to myself or others; he never spoke to me of family matters, ancient or modern; and he gave me no encouragement to communicate my feelings to him with the freedom which a son should always experience in the presence of his father. On the contrary, the little intercourse that passed between us, was uniformly distant and chilling,—like that which is sometimes kept up by a guardian towards his ward, provided no ties of blood bind them to one another, but bearing no semblance whatever to that free communion of soul, mind, and feeling, which, if it exist any where, might be expected to exist between a parent and a child.

"In the society of such a man, it was impossible that I could find any enjoyment, and to his society I was, when at home, almost exclusively confined; for the peculiarities of my father's temper were such, that few of his neighbours kept up with him more than a distant or formal acquaintance. Once or twice a year a stately dinner was prepared, at which some half-dozen country gentlemen would make their appearance; but these meetings always passed off heavily at the time, and they led to no familiar intercourse afterwards. Indeed, my father was manifestly neither loved nor courted by any one. His very servants and tenants avoided him as often as they could; and when that was impossible, they stood before him in undisguised alarm. Whence all this arose I am unable even to conjecture, for of his

early history I never heard a syllable; and unless something more extraordinary occurred in his youth than took place since my memory serves, there was certainly no adequate reason for it.

"I had removed from Eton, after going through the regular course, and kept a few terms at Cambridge, when that event befel upon which the whole of my future fortunes were doomed to turn.

"It was on a beautiful evening in June, that, with feelings widely different from those which I could have wished to experience, I found myself approaching the place of my nativity. There were no pleasing recollections associated with that lonely and desolate mansion. Its great empty halls and half-furnished apartments, through which the voice of mirth and revelry never echoed, its long passages and dreary corridors, where the sound of a footstep would have startled had it reached the ear, rose with no very agreeable colours before my view; and when I considered that amid this solitude the whole of a tedious summer must be passed, I could not avoid shuddering at the prospect. I was in this mood, when a sudden stopping of the horses induced me to sit forward in the chaise for the purpose of ascertaining the cause. There was no possibility of mistaking the principal objects about me. I recognised at once the beech grove that skirted the park, and the commencement of the long avenue which led up to the mansion; but in minuter details a change had occurred, which set all my surmises and calculations at defiance. The lodge, which, when I last entered it, was more than half unroofed and in ruins, presented now the appearance of a neat and comfortable cottage; it was newly thatched, glazed, and whitewashed, and a spot of ground tastefully laid out in cultivation lay behind it. In like manner the pillars and gates had undergone a thorough repair; the palings seemed to have been lately renewed; and the very grass and weeds which used to overgrow the drive, had all disappeared. Instead of the slatternly dame, likewise, by whom I was accustomed to be met here, a pretty country girl, about ten or twelve years old, threw open the gate, and dropped a courtesy as the chaise rolled through, with the grace of one accustomed to the office. I need scarcely say

that all this excited in me no little amazement; but if I ex perienced surprise at the aspect of things in themselves t unimportant, my astonishment increased tenfold, whe other and still greater changes appeared.

"As I approached the house, I became at every step mo and more aware that a complete revolution must have take place in my father's style of living. The lawn, of which m most remote recollection presented no other picture than of rough and neglected plot of grass, was now mowed with th utmost care, and tastefully adorned at different points wit elumps of flowering shrubs and ornamental evergreens. light wire-fence protected it from the approach of the shee which in former days were accustomed to browse up to th very windows; and a wicket composed of the same materia admitted us to a well-cleaned gravel walk, which extend in front of the main entrance. Then again, on lookin up towards the house itself, I beheld that the shutters every window were open, that the frames had been late painted, and the glass universally repaired, and that an a of comfort was cast over the entire exterior, such as I ha never seen it wear until now. By this time the carriage ha stopped, and the postilion having rung the bell, the hal door was opened by a servant in a neat morning livery; wh though manifestly unacquainted with my name and circum stances, civilly requested me to walk in. I followed th lackey, not like one entering his father's house, but like stranger in a place unknown to him; and truly the aspe of every thing had undergone a revolution so complete, th I almost doubted whether the case were not really so.

"I was conducted through the entrance-hall, in the furn ishing and decoration of which I found it difficult to tra out any resemblance to the cheerless and uncomfortab vestibule, so familiar to my early years. Every thing w changed: handsome mahogany chairs, marked with th family arms, had taken the place of the antique oak benches which formerly stood here; a mosaic pavement ha supplanted the slabs; marble tables stood here and ther and a stove of the newest construction held out a promise warmth and comfort in the winter. Then again, there we elegant folding-doors, which cut off the outer from the inn

hall,—a distinction which till of late had not been recognised; and if the garnishing of the outer compartment sufficed to excite my amazement, much more forcibly was that feeling roused by what I beheld in the inner. Rich carpets covered the floor; gilded lamps hung from the ceiling; and the great oaken staircase leading up to the lodging-rooms, which began here, had received a polish, bright as the art of man could bestow upon it. But greater wonders than even these awaited me.

"We had by this time reached the door of the drawing-room, when the servant, as a preparatory step to throwing it open, demanded my name. I was so confounded that I could not contrive to stammer it out so as to be understood; and the man, mistaking my words, ushered me in under some appellation, the sound of which I have forgotten. I walked forward; but my surprise amounted to positive stupefaction, when there arose to meet me—not my father, but a lady, beautiful as an angel, young, elegant, graceful in every motion, with eyes that did not look, but speak—ay, sir, speak words, plain, intelligible words—dark, large, brilliant, surmounted with long lashes, which softened, whilst they took not away from, the variable expression of the orbs beneath them.—But I must command myself—so let that pass.

"In what manner I received the salutation of the stranger, I cannot tell; only I remember, that when I made an effort to speak, my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth, and I stood like one rooted to the spot by some sudden spell, or frozen into stone. The lady seemed surprised at my emotion, I even fancied that she became alarmed, for she uttered something in a hurried tone, the purport of which I could not comprehend, and made a movement as if to retire; but before she could carry that resolution into effect, a door, which communicated between the saloon and the library, was thrown open, and my father entered. The sight of him recalled me instantly to my senses. I advanced to receive the hand which he held out; and in the next instant, the whole mystery around me was explained.

"'You are welcome home again, Charles,' said my father, with more than usual kindness in his tone; 'I dare

say the aspect which things have assumed since you were last here, has caused you no little astonishment; yet I am willing to hope, that astonishment is not the only feeling likely to be roused. Charlotte, my love,' continued he, turning to the lady, 'permit me to introduce to you my son, whom you will find, I trust, an agreeable companion at moments when I may be unable to enjoy your society. Charles, in this lady you see one who is entitled, by every tie of moral obligation, to your respect and affection. She has consented to make me the happiest of men; and she now stands towards you in the relation of a mother.'

"'A mother!' cried I, staggering back, as if struck by some sudden and deadly blow: 'A mother! Is this lady, then, your wife?'

"'Yes, sir,' replied my father, in his old tone of asperity; 'this lady is my wife. Is there any thing so very remarkable in that circumstance, as that you should not be able to comprehend it?'

"No, sir, no—not exactly so,' said I, scarcely knowing what I said; 'but the intelligence has come upon me so suddenly—I knew not that any such step was in contemplation—that, in short, I know not what to say, except that your announcement has perfectly amazed me.'

"'I see no reason why it should produce that effect,' replied he; 'there is nothing so very startling in the fact that a man who has spent twenty years in solitude should become weary of living alone, or that he should ally himself with one every way worthy of his esteem and affection.'

"This was spoken coldly and deliberately, with an emphasis of which I could not mistake the purport; yet I answered it by observing, that I had received no intimation of the intended change; and that his silence on such a subject surprised me more than the line of conduct which he had seen fit to pursue.

"'I was not aware,' replied he in a sarcastic tone, into which he knew well how to throw the very gall of bitterness, 'that I had ever given you cause to regard yourself as the arbiter of my destinies. I have not been in the habit of soliciting your advice on different matters, and should scarcely think of desiring it on an occasion like the

present. But enough of such discussion—I have told you how this lady and yourself are connected; it remains for you to behave towards her as that connexion demands.'

"I had by this time recovered in some degree from my agitation, and turned towards my mother-in-law, with the intention of offering an apology for the strangeness of my behaviour. She trembled violently,—whether from fear, or mere embarrassment, it was, of course, impossible for me to tell; whilst her respiration appeared to go on with difficulty, and her colour went and came like clouds over the face of the moon on a stormy night. By degrees, however, the awkwardness of manner inseparable from so extraordinary an introduction, departed. She recovered the calm and placid air which distinguished her when she rose to bid me welcome; and the ease which marked her gestures, as well as the readiness with which we entered into conversation, soon produced the happiest effect upon me. In five minutes every thing awkward in our first meeting was forgotten, and we behaved towards each other as persons in our situation might be expected to behave.

"It was now that I found leisure to cast my eyes round upon the apartment in which we were sitting; and there, as well as elsewhere, I saw that a perfect revolution had occurred. The ancient cane-backed chairs and sofas had been displaced to make room for couches covered with the costliest silks; rosewood tables, richly inlaid, were scattered here and there in elegant confusion; splendid pier-glasses filled up the recesses, and curtains of the finest stuffs ornamented the windows; whilst even the paper upon the walls, as well as the painting on the roof and panels, had all been renewed in the most expensive and brilliant manner. Nor was it in the saloon alone that the hand of improvement had been at work. There was not an apartment in the house, from the servants' hall to the nursery, which had not undergone some change; whilst all that were in any degree conspicuous, as well in the sleeping as in the living compartment, had been entirely refurnished.

"I cannot pretend to describe the effect which this change produced upon me. That it was for the better, I felt and acknowledged; yet, with the perverseness of human nature,

there were moments when the absence of this or that long-remembered piece of lumber stirred up in me a sensation of which I did not imagine that a cause so trifling could have been productive. In like manner, it was with no ordinary pain that I observed, that of the faces of the domestics who went and came about us, not one was familiar. The old servants, like the old furniture, had all been dismissed, to make way for others—more sightly perhaps, and more submissive, but whether superior in the essentials of honesty and fidelity, might well be doubted. These things cut deeply. For the first day or two, indeed, the effect of them was such as to render me but little disposed to court the society either of my father or his bride; nor was it till I had been nearly a week at home, that the former thought fit to make me in any degree acquainted with the origin and progress of his new connexion.

"There was little in the story to interest me at the moment; there is still less that deserves record now. Charlotte Howard was an orphan, the penniless niece of one of our neighbours, on whose bounty she absolutely depended. Having lately returned from school, she attracted my father's notice, during a visit which he happened to pay to her uncle; and as he found her not more beautiful than amiable and accomplished, he made a tender of his hand. Charlotte was barely eighteen, my father forty-nine; but to counterbalance this difference of ages, she was portionless, whilst he was understood to be immensely rich. My father did not state how much he owed to the lady's personal predilection, how much to the persuasions of her guardian: on that head, he wisely left me to judge for myself; but the result was, that about six weeks previous to the commencement of the long vacation, he led her, a weeping and bashful bride, to the altar. Yes; he used the word bashful, as if her reluctance were merely feigned,—as if she, a girl, artless, innocent, gay, lovely, felt no more than the ordinary coyness of a maiden so situated, in giving her hand to one—but no matter. He admitted that she wept—he did not say how she wept—he did not even allude to *the hot scalding* tears of utter misery, whose fountain lies in *the innermost soul*, and which run over only when hope is *blighted for ever*. No, no; I was encouraged to conjure up

an image of modest dewdrops—of one or two tears cheated from the eye, more through the power of momentary excitement than by the influence of sorrow. How different was all this from the truth!

"Well, the bride was carried off to the metropolis, where, amidst the gaiety of a London life, her first lessons in the duties of the married state were learned. In the mean while all those changes in and about the park, which had so powerfully affected me, were wrought; and only one fortnight previous to my return, the happy pair took possession of their renovated mansion. Such is the substance of a conversation which I held with my father, on a certain day after dinner, to which I listened as to something neither very agreeable nor very interesting. How deeply did I deceive myself, in regarding it as devoid of interest!

"I know not whence it arose, but I experienced towards my mother-in-law, about this time, a feeling which I could not describe, but which tempted me as much as possible to shun her company, particularly when no other persons chanced to be by. Not that I ever thought of her with aversion. To look upon that countenance, to behold the varied and glowing expression of those eyes, yet entertain towards the being whose eyes met mine, any thing in the most remote degree akin to aversion, was impossible. On the contrary, I never beheld her without admiration, the deepest, the most intense. I never listened to the music of her voice, without a delight such as no other sound in nature could produce. I never thought of her when absent, without a degree of interest painful indeed, but painful only from its excess. Yet I avoided her, as if there had been a pestilence in her breath, and a pollution in her touch. It was not often that I endeavoured to account for this; but when I did, images arose, humiliating and distressing, of the sort of tie which had brought us acquainted, and held us together. I could not bear to think of her as my father's wife—as one whom I was bound to approach with deference and look upon with respect; yet I felt that to regard her only as the beautiful and innocent girl, and to treat her *like a sister or a friend*, would at once displease the man to *whom I was indebted for* my being, and infringe, serious-

and improperly, upon the usages of society. Many days therefore elapsed, ere we could be said to know more of each other's tastes and habits than was disclosed at the moment of our first introduction:—well would it have been for both, had this just and cautious reserve been persevered in!

"With his state of celibacy, my father had, it appeared, put off that morose and haughty humour which kept him at a distance from all his neighbours. Repeatedly since their return from London, had the new-married couple thrown open their doors to gay parties, and the old walls had more than once rung again to the tones of singing and minstrelsy. So excellent a custom was not to be interrupted by the arrival of the heir of the lordship; on the contrary, I was given to understand that, in honour of my visit, the entire neighbourhood had been invited to an entertainment, which was to exceed in splendour and elegance every thing of the kind which had for many years taken place in this part of the country.

"With what absolute indifference I listened to the announcement! What was gaiety or splendour to me? I had become all at once the most humiliated and self-condemned of human beings. All the glories of an Eastern palace, had they been spread out before me, would have failed to excite any pleasurable emotion. Nay, I pined for the gloom which was now dispelled for ever, and looked back with regret upon the very state of existence which was once the source of my most serious repining.

"The day of gala came in its course, and brought with it a crowd of guests of all ages, of both sexes, and of every rank—from the proud wearer of the earl's coronet, down to the simple commoner. Nothing could exceed the hospitable urbanity of my father; and the gentle attentions of his bride to all within her reach, were beyond measure gratifying. Then, again, as to the banquet—no luxury which earth, air, or water could produce, was wanted. The choicest wines were passed round with exuberant liberality; a crowd of servants in rich liveries prevented every wish; and the glare of golden lamps was reflected back by a profusion of massive plate, under which the table and sideboards groaned. Next followed the dance, the conversa

none, the promenade, relieved and interrupted from time to time by bursts of the most exquisite music, till every sense seemed deadened by the multiplied sources of enjoyment, with which it was not so much supplied as sated. And how was I affected by all this? I looked on with the vacant stare of a spectator at a show which he understands to be delusive and unreal. I appeared, indeed, to mingle, like the rest, in every amusement; I even gazed round upon the faces of my father's guests, seeking for one on which my eye might repose so much as for a moment. But I found none. Many fair countenances there were,—laughing, lively, happy countenances,—such as meet us in our dreams, when these are most pleasing, and leave a trace behind them when we awake. But before my eye that night they passed like shadows. There was but one countenance on which I could endure to gaze—and that one was—my mother. Heavens! what a profanation of the term. Charlotte Howard, the dark-eyed lively girl of eighteen, my mother!—she, who was by two full years my junior,—who smiled upon me, not with the haughty glance of a superior, but with the mild, beseeching look of one who saw my agitation, and would have calmed it had she possessed the power,—who seemed to court not to demand my notice, as if she needed support from me, and would have taken it as a boon!—Could I think of her as my mother? No; I never beheld her in that light; I could not think of her in that fashion. I was cold and distant towards her, it is true—cold in my manner, distant in my address; but neither my coldness nor distance proceeded from that jealous aversion with which, as my step-mother, I might have been supposed to regard her. I shrank from her, because I already felt that I dared not trust myself near her;—yet my eyes followed her every movement, as if there were a spell upon them, which not all my efforts would suffice to break.

"At last she sat down to her harp. Though I had been upwards of a fortnight under the same roof with her, I had never yet heard her sing or play; for my father had no taste for music, and I did not presume to solicit that she *would perform for my gratification.* I was sitting at the

moment alone in a distant corner of the saloon, pretending fatigue, which in reality I did not experience, that I might escape for a few minutes from the toil of making myself agreeable, or supporting a conversation in which I took no interest. Of all the objects in the passing pageant, I beheld but her alone; and when there was a call of silence I held my very breath, lest its sound should interrupt it. How gracefully she stretched her fair round arm over the instrument!—with what taste she swept the chords as a prelude to her song! and then striking a few bold notes by way of symphony, she raised her eyes as if to ask for inspiration from on high. In an instant, her countenance was lighted up, and there burst from her a gush of sweet sounds, so mellow, so true, so plaintive, yet so powerful, that the most insensible could not listen without visible emotion. For me, I was entranced. All power of motion was taken away from me; I tried to draw near to her, but could not—I was spell-bound, as if by the voice of an angel.

"Charlotte appeared distressed by the very plaudits which were intended to give her pleasure. She rose, blushing deeply, from her instrument, and made as if she intended to cross the saloon to a spot where a group of gay loungers were congregated together. At that instant her eye caught mine. What the expression of my gaze might be, I knew not; doubtless it was the same which had accompanied every glance that I cast upon her that night; but it produced a vivid, and, as I could not but observe, a painful effect upon her. Her colour fled, and she grew pale as death; then again the blood rushed to her cheek with increased violence; her breathing became suddenly interrupted, and she staggered as if threatened with a fit. I saw her condition, and sprang forward to assist her; but before I could reach the spot her self-command had returned. 'I thank you,' said she, in a low tone, and with a smile beautiful but melancholy; 'I am better now; it was only a momentary faintness, occasioned by the heat of the room. But how is it that *you* keep so much apart?' added she, *speaking more easily*, and resuming at once her naturally

cheerful manner: 'I have observed you withdraw more than once, as if the fatigue were too great for you; or it may be that you dislike dancing—is it so?'

"'No, no,' replied I hurriedly; 'on the contrary, I delight in it; and as to my health, it never was more sound, nor were my spirits ever higher. May I convince you of my taste for dancing by requesting the honour of your hand? or——' and I was conscious, as I uttered the last half of the sentence, that my tone of voice, no less than my assumed gaiety, fell—'is it allowable in us, circumstanced as we are, to dance together?'

"'Oh surely,' answered she calmly; 'why not? We will lead off this dance, if you please.'

"We did so; but there was madness in the entire proceeding,—glaring, palpable madness. We danced—at least I danced—like one who knew not whether he slept or were awake. Our hands, as a matter of necessity, frequently met; as often as this occurred, a thrill passed through me like a shock of electricity, and my very brain swam confusedly. At last we gained the bottom of the set, and she rallied me, not however without a visible effort, on my forgetfulness. I tried to answer in the same strain of badinage, but my efforts proved unavailing; and I felt that to remain where I was any longer, yet retain my senses, was hopeless. I rose from the couch on which we had sat down, and complaining of a sudden indisposition, prepared to withdraw. 'Good God! then you are really ill,' exclaimed she, in a voice full of emotion; 'and I have thoughtlessly induced you to do that which has increased your indisposition.'

"'Not so,' replied I, struggling hard to appear calm; 'it is a trifling headach, which a few moments of quiet will remove. I will retire beyond the sound of music for a while, and return again when I feel better;' and I walked away as I spoke. I opened the door of the saloon; but before I closed it again, looked round. She stood, as I had quitted her, in an attitude of anxiety and alarm: her eye had followed my movements, and now it met mine, not designedly, but by instinct. What a look was that! I felt it in my heart, *my soul, my brain; it* stirred up thoughts which, had *they continued to burn* but a moment longer, [redacted]

driven me to insanity. I saw it ever after in my waking visions, and in my sleeping dreams; at midnight and at noonday it was equally before me. Yet what was the language that it spoke? I could not tell; I did not dare to ask: I read in it something which I desired to read, yet which, having read, I would have given worlds not to have observed. I ran with the step of a maniac to my chamber; I closed the door, locking and bolting it, as if against some deadly enemy; and I revisited the scene of festivity that night no more.

"It was late on the following morning before the breakfast-bell rang. On obeying its summons, I found that most of the guests of the preceding evening were gone, but that several still remained. All appeared jaded, as a matter of course; a night of revelry seldom fails to bring in a morning of languor; but on none had fatigue produced so marked an effect as upon my father and his bride. The former, though manifestly struggling to wear the smooth brow of one at peace with himself and with every one around him, could not always repress a frown which told a tale of internal suffering either in body or mind;—the latter was dejected, thoughtful, silent, and uneasy,—and the more uneasy as her efforts to appear otherwise were too palpable to escape detection. I had done nothing to produce such effects. No, no; if there were other causes besides bodily fatigue for the embarrassment which displayed itself in the manner of the new-married couple, no blame could possibly attach to me. Why then did my conscience sting me? or rather, why did the suspicion arise at all, that there were other causes besides that which both avowed, and which all but myself appeared to admit? I blushed internally as these questions occurred, and having hastily concluded my meal, I walked abroad to commune with my own heart in the solitude of the park.

"When I reached the house, the hall clock was striking a third quarter; and on looking up, I perceived that the dinner hour was close at hand. I hurried off to my own apartment; but before I reached it, sounds smote upon my ear, which caused me unconsciously to stop. It was necessary, *in order* to reach my own, that I should pass my *father's dressing*-room, the door of which happened to be ajar.

Heaven knows, there is no character so contemptible in my eyes as that of an eaves-dropper; nor am I conscious that in taking the step which I took then, I incurred the guilt—for guilt it surely is—of seeking to pry into the secrets of others; but there was a magic in Charlotte's voice which I never could resist. Its tones fell around me, and I paused to drink them in, more gratefully than the wanderer in the desert drinks from a well where no water was anticipated. My feelings may be guessed at, when I discovered that she spoke not in joy but in sorrow. The words I could not overhear—I did not desire to overhear them;—but the tones were those of deep distress—of bitter heartfelt misery. Then came the sound of my father's voice, stern, as I had been told it was when addressed to my mother. I could bear this no longer. Plausible as he was when strangers stood by, and smooth and oily as his outward manner might be, it was evident that in private he gave vent to his cruel disposition, and that he exercised his cruelty upon his bride. I felt every vein in my forehead and temples swell, as the idea rose into my mind. I rushed forward, a curse trembling upon my tongue, a curse directed even against the author of my being, nor was it without an effort almost supernatural that I succeeded in repressing it. But I did suppress it. I even calmed in some degree the frenzy that raged within me; and having completed my toilet, I descended with an unruffled countenance to the dining-room.

"The last of our party had taken their departure some hours before, and we sat down, my father, Charlotte, and I, to a family meal. It was not a comfortable one. He indeed had put on that rigidity of countenance, which he desired should be mistaken for an expression of perfect good humour; whilst I struggled hard to appear in my usual spirits; and even Charlotte strove to look—what she felt not—happy. But our conversation, being on all hands forced, soon became flat, and finally died away into mere question and answer. Charlotte, indeed, complained of illness, which she attributed to the exertions of last night, and quitted us almost as soon as the cloth was withdrawn; and then my father *and I were left to* enjoy as we might, each other's *ciety.*

"For some minutes neither party had spoken, and my thoughts were beginning to wander I scarce knew whither when my father, after filling his glass, and pushing the bottle to me, desired to know how I liked my mother-in-law I do not believe that any peculiarity of manner accompanied this question,—I am quite sure that it was a natural one and one which ought to have produced no such effect upon me; but I started in my seat at the words, and turned round as if an evil spirit had spoken. My father was not so much as looking towards me: he sat with his elbow upon the table watching, to all appearance, the sun, as it sat behind a hill and though a second or two elapsed ere I could so far command myself as to reply, he either took, or appeared to take no notice of my embarrassment. As may easily be imagined I expressed myself, when I did speak, greatly delighted with the lady; I passed upon her such ordinary eulogiums as men are accustomed to bestow upon women in whom they take no great interest.

"'I am glad you are pleased with her,' replied he, in the same tone of indifference, and still gazing steadily upon the setting sun. 'She is an extremely amiable and excellent person; somewhat young and inexperienced, no doubt; but perfectly free from deceit and affectation. Yet your manner towards her has not been such as to impress her with the belief that you really like her. So she says, at least, for I have seen nothing of the kind; but she complains that you shun her on every possible occasion, and that if by any accident you cannot effect your escape, your address is always formal, and your air distant. Surely you are above the silly feeling which sometimes urges men to be jealous of their fathers' wives.'

"He turned round as he spoke; but though I did my best to read his secret thoughts, I could discover nothing in the glance of his eye beyond the expression naturally connected with the subject of our conversation. Relieved beyond measure at this, I hastened to assure him that no such paltry sentiments were encouraged by me; and I strove to account for a shyness, of which I was too conscious to deny it, by reminding him of the brief standing of our acquaintance, and the peculiar circumstances under which

commenced. All this seemed to be taken as I could have wished. He admitted that our first interview was not such as to lead to an immediate intimacy, but hoped that time would gradually dispel every unpleasant association, which that might have produced, and that, before long we should be on a footing of easy familiarity which the connexion subsisting between us demanded.

"'Besides,' continued he, 'you are so nearly of the same age, that to treat one another with coldness or excess of deference were ridiculous. She must be to you rather as a sister than a mother,—indeed, she ought perhaps to have been your wife rather than mine.'

"I cannot tell whether my own heart deceived me, but, as he uttered these words, I fancied that I could detect in the corner of his eye a lurking suspicion, the more hideous as it was not intended to be seen. If I was right, the expression lasted but for an instant,—so abrupt indeed were both its coming and going, that thought itself could hardly overtake it,—and then all was again smooth and placid. The speech itself, however, was sufficient to embarrass me, for I was at a loss not only how to reply, but how to understand it; so I stammered out something about behaving on all occasions to my father's wife as her station in the family required. My father took no notice of these expressions. He changed the subject, indeed, almost immediately; and the remainder of our *tête-à-tête* passed off as such conferrences were accustomed to do.

"I know not why I have dwelt thus minutely upon the occurrences which marked the commencement of Charlotte's and my acquaintance. In themselves, I am aware that they possess few claims upon the notice of a stranger; yet their influence upon me was great and lasting—so lasting indeed as to control my entire destiny. They have left too an impression upon my mind so deep, that years will not suffice to blot it out, should years of hated existence be forced upon me. But I will strive to write more concisely hereafter; I will dwell upon nothing which the nature of the task I have imposed upon myself will suffer me to pass by.

"Days, weeks, nay months passed away, without the occurrence of any incident particularly deserving of notice. For a *time the course of gaiety* in which he had embarked

was pursued by my father with steady resolution, and visits were frequently paid to our neighbours, as they in their turn were frequently entertained at home. But by degrees his old humour began again to obtain the ascendancy over him. His pride and ill-humour broke out on more than one occasion, with a violence which no equal could endure; and his neighbours, as a necessary consequence, grew cold in civilities which seemed so little valued and were so thanklessly received.

"This change on their part operated only to rouse the natural implacability of his temper. A slight offered or received, sufficed to put an end at once to all further intercourse with the offending party, no matter how gross and glaring the provocation might be. In this manner, first one, then another, of our visiters fell off, till ———— was left once more in the state of almost total solitude which formerly distinguished it.

"In proportion as this state of things attained its climax, my father's retired and unsocial habits resumed their ascendancy over himself. His voice recovered its natural tones; he rarely spoke except in anger, or, which was infinitely worse, in bitter raillery. The society of his wife appeared to possess no charms for him, and mine he rather shunned than courted. We never saw him, indeed, except at meals, for his mornings were spent constantly in the library, and he retired thither again as soon as the dinner ended; and as to any act of kindness or attention, neither the one nor the other received such at his hands. I need not after this observe, that the feeling so opposed to love, which I had struggled to subdue, again oppressed me as often as a thought of my father occurred; whilst poor Charlotte's dread of him became before long too conspicuous to be concealed.

"The consequence of all this was, that she and I were thrown continually upon one another for society, for consolation, I had almost said for support; whilst the reserve which had hitherto subsisted between us melted gradually away.

"*Instead* of separating for the rest of the morning, as we *had been accustomed* to do, at the breakfast-table, we found *ourselves* occupying the same apartment—she busied w

her needle or her pencil, and I reading aloud the work of some author equally a favourite with both. Then came the time of exercise; and our walks, our rides, our drives, were felt to possess many additional attractions, now that they were taken, not separately but together. Music, too, lent its powerful attractions. Our tastes here, as in literature, accorded; and the songs which she sang with the liveliest satisfaction to herself, were listened to by me with a feeling too deep even for tears.

"Need I say how all this ended? Wedded to one whom she had never loved, whose years alone had been sufficient obstacle to a union so revolting; and treated, even within a few months from her bridal day, not with indifference only, but with harshness and brutality; can it be wondered at, if she unconsciously gave to another that which was no longer hers to give—even though that other was the son of her husband, and as a necessary consequence, a being from whom she was divided by a gulph never to be passed?—In this, she but obeyed the impulses which nature has implanted in every bosom; and obeying them without a consciousness of the results to which they lead, she was innocent. But for me, no such excuse was mine. I saw the chasm before me, —plainly, clearly saw it. I knew even from the first, that to remain near her, yet retain the mastery over myself, was impossible. Then why did I not leave her? Why did I not abandon my home for ever?—a home which, till she entered it, possessed no attractions, and which, now that she was there, ought to have been regarded with horror. I cannot answer these questions. There was a spell upon me, which drove me on, with eyes open and senses wide awake, into the abyss that some power higher than my own will had prepared for me; and I followed its impulse, without so much as making one struggle to resist it.

"In this manner the remaining portion of summer rolled on, and autumn came in, with all his variegated hues and sombre beauty. How delicious were the walks which we took at that glorious season, amidst groves dark with decaying foliage! How soothing were the moments which we spent *under some tall beech* or umbrageous elm, whilst the *dead leaves shaken from* the branches at every breath, fell

one by one at our feet! True, the thought of parting came but too frequently into our minds, for the period of my sojourn at home was drawing rapidly to a close; but the parting hour was yet by several weeks distant; and when did young hearts learn to anticipate distress? Never: at those blessed moments (for blessed I must still regard them), every thing was forgotten beyond the events of the passing hour.

"Yet let me not be misunderstood. Never had there passed between us one word, one syllable, one allusion, which the angels of light would have blushed to witness. Our love, if such it must be called, was wholly unmixed with every earthly and debasing passion. She was to me an object of adoration,—an idol,—to be gazed upon in holy rapture, —but with a rapture sanctified by the most profound respect; whilst to her, I was as the brother of her affections—the friend on whom alone she leaned for aid in her difficulties, and consolation in her griefs. Could there be aught impure in the intercourse of persons actuated by these sentiments, and these only? Why was it, then, that such moments never failed to bring in their train hours of agony and remorse?

"The fatal period, so often thought of, and to which every allusion had been, as it were, studiously avoided, came at last. The middle of October arrived, and brought with it the necessity of my immediate abandonment of ——, and return to college. For some days previously, our intercourse, though not less constant than before, had been accompanied with a degree of restraint perfectly novel. The truth is, that we were equally desirous of hiding the sorrows of which both were equally conscious, and the effort necessary to ensure success caused us to appear strange in each other's eyes. But the attempt, though nobly made, and for a while steadily persevered in, proved ultimately useless. Feeling, if it be really strong, will break through every restraint both of prudence and duty; and ours were far too impetuous not to sweep all such barriers before them.

"It was now the day preceding that which had been fixed for the commencement of my journey. It was Sunday, too, —that day of holy rest which, in the country at least, never *dawns without* bringing a blessing along with it, both upon

and beast; and Charlotte and myself, according to our invariable practice, attended divine service together. My father was not of the party; indeed, many years had elapsed since he last beheld the interior of a church, of which, and of the clergy, it was too much his custom, if he spoke at all, to speak in terms of contempt.

"On no previous occasion had the simple but sublime service of the Liturgy produced so powerful an effect upon me: not at any moment of my life was I conscious of devotional feelings deeper or more engrossing than came over me then. I prayed, I say not fervently, but bitterly; the very tears made their way through the hands in which my face was buried; my whole soul seemed abstracted from earthly considerations, and even Charlotte was, for a time, forgotten. How she was affected, I know not; for from the commencement of the service to its close, I never once beheld her, so entirely was my attention given up to the solemn business in which I was engaged.

"Is it not strange that feeling such as this should leave no hallow behind it? Perhaps my prayers were breathed forth in a temper not sufficiently submissive; or it may be, that though the imagination became excited to a high degree, the heart was never touched. Be it so. All of which I am aware is this, that the first breath that blew upon me, after I quitted the edifice, scattered every pious sentiment to the elements, and that I became again the slave of a passion as resistless as it was fatal, and as fatal as it was unholy.

"We did not return home as soon as the service concluded; but Charlotte passing her arm through mine, we sauntered on towards our favourite retreat in the beech-wood. We sat down as usual, just within the shelter of the grove, on a mound from whence a view of the whole landscape could be obtained, whilst we were ourselves concealed from observation. The day was beautifully mild and serene; there was not a cloud in the sky, nor a breath of air astir sufficiently violent to shake a withered leaf from its stem. A universal silence was around us, broken only by the full, clear, and melodious notes of a thrush, which poured, from a brake hard by, a torrent of natural music.

We looked abroad, too, upon a scene of no ordinary beauty, —upon herds of deer quietly grazing,—upon the modest church more than half concealed in the grove that encircled it,—upon hamlets, villages, and solitary cottages, reposing in the sanctity of the sabbath; but of human beings not a trace could be discerned. There was something in this perfect solitude particularly affecting to persons in our situation; we did not interrupt it by any attempt at conversation, to which we felt ourselves quite unequal, but sat in silence, whilst visions the most melancholy passed over our minds, like the shadows of clouds on a summer's day over the side of a hill.

"At last, the gradual inclination of the sun towards the west, warned us that it was time to quit the spot; we rose, as if by common consent, to obey the impulse, just as his disk reached the horizon; and we stood motionless, whilst it sank lower and lower, till it wholly disappeared. It was then that for the first time I ventured to speak; what I said I know not; I believe it was some commonplace remark, such as the circumstances of the case called forth,—as that I should be far away when next she beheld the sun set, or something to that purport; but it appeared as if the tones of my voice were alone required to break the spell which had so long bound us, and to cause the feeling of both, hitherto painfully repressed, to overflow.—Charlotte burst into tears. Instinctively I threw my arm round her waist,—a movement which she sought not to prevent, and then she laid her head upon my shoulder, and wept bitterly. I cannot pretend to describe what I felt at that moment; I could not speak comfort to her, for my own tears choked my utterance; but I pressed her to my heart, as if it were there, and there only, that she must read the secret which my lips refused to reveal.

"We stood thus for several moments; not a sentence had been spoken by either, though both were too fully aware of the issue to which matters had been driven; when Charlotte, by a desperate effort, checked her weeping, and raising her head from my shoulder, proposed that we should return home. I obeyed without hesitation, and, giving her my arm, we set forward in the direction of the house.

"We had just cleared the wood, when, happening to look back, I perceived the figure of a man passing with apparent caution to the right,—and a single glance served to convince me that it was my father. A horrible consciousness struck at once to my heart. I permitted Charlotte's arm to drop from mine, my senses all but forsook me, and it was not without difficulty that I prevented myself from falling to the ground. Alarmed at my condition, though ignorant of its cause, she shrieked aloud, and addressed to me in her agony, terms such as she ought never to have employed, nor I permitted. The words, not less than the manner of the speaker, restored to me at once my self-command. I perceived that she had not observed the spectacle which had so dreadfully shocked me; and determined not to distress her by any intimation of the truth, I pretended that a sudden dizziness had come over me, to which I was occasionally subject. I then urged her to clear away every trace of tears from her cheeks; and once more taking her arm in mine, led her at a quick pace to the house.

"We parted at the hall, Charlotte going to the drawing-room, whilst I hurried off to my own apartment, to indulge in a train of ideas more hideous than had ever yet entered into my mind. Could it be that my father entertained any suspicion of my honour, or his wife's fidelity? Could he act the part of a spy upon us, all the while that he pretended to desire our intimacy? Above all, was it impossible for him to have witnessed all that passed in the beech-wood?—What then? Had we been guilty of any deed, or spoken a single word, of which there was real cause to be ashamed? No! Whatever our feelings might have been, at least they were not disclosed; and the embrace,—was it more than the peculiar circumstances in which we stood authorised? Had I done aught besides what was enjoined upon me, in behaving towards Charlotte as a brother and a friend? And was it not natural, on the eve of parting, that we should exhibit some such proofs that we looked forward to the separation with regret?

"All these questions I strove to answer to my own satisfaction; but there was a fiend in the back-ground which

continually reminded me, that the answers, though true in letter, were false in spirit. How conscience does make cowards of us! Had my own heart been able to acquit me, there would have been nothing in nature beside capable of stirring up one painful reflection; but my heart did not acquit me, and all my anticipations were, in consequence, terrible. I thought of the injury I had done, and of its probable punishment—a punishment to be poured out not upon me alone, for that I could have borne, but upon one dearer to me than life—to secure whose happiness I would have been content to sacrifice not only present peace, but eternity itself. I thought of Charlotte, not merely neglected and occasionally chid, as was her fate now; but upbraided, insulted, disgraced, turned out upon a cold world, with a reputation blasted, and a broken heart;—whilst I, the miserable cause of all this, could not offer to her so much as the last refuge of the guilty and the desperate.

"Maddened with the horrid picture, I threw myself with my face upon the bed, my whole frame shaking in convulsive agony; till the sweat-drops stood upon my brow like dew, and my brain burned as if it had been on fire.

"By degrees, however, hope, that inextinguishable principle in minds not utterly seared, began to exert its influence. There were no proofs before me, either that my father was really suspicious, or that, being so, he had watched our proceedings; still less had conclusive evidence appeared that our proceedings on that day were observed. At the moment when I saw him, he was too far removed from the spot where we had sat, to overhear our conversation, had such passed between us; and the shape of the wood was, I felt confident, such as to screen our very figures from his observation.

"Should the case be so, then all might yet be well, and I should leave Charlotte exposed to no greater risks and miseries than were already about her. But should it not,—I would not receive that impression again. There was something within which whispered that all could not be lost. We were not sufficiently guilty to merit utter perdition; *and Heaven was* too just to destroy on account of errors *purely involuntary*, and only of the mind. No, no; my *fears had* been too excessive, and I did wrong to indulge

At all events, there was no advantage to be derived the anticipation of evil; of the coming of which, if it to come, I should soon receive tokens not to be misun-ood; so I determined to command myself, and to be ed in my judgment of what was likely to fall out, by ehaviour of my father when we met.

Thus reasoning, I made haste to change my dress, and nded to the dining-room. Just as I reached the door s apartment, my father came forth, and I found, that ver sturdy resolutions may be whilst the necessity of g up to them is remote, they hold but an insecure nd if suddenly put to the test. My heart beat quick, I would have passed on; but he spoke, and, agitated as s, I retained my senses sufficiently about me to be aware the moment of trial had arrived. I stopped. His vation was one of ordinary salutation merely. He d that I had had a pleasant walk—said that the sun autifully, and predicted an agreeable day for my jour-n the morrow; and he did so in a tone perfectly calm natural: indeed, if any thing, with more of kindness in n he had of late cared to show.

felt as if a mountain had been removed from my chest. athed again. I was like a person to whom liberty is pectedly restored,—like a criminal reprieved on the scaffold. Hope for once had not deceived me; and uspicions were proved to be groundless. With a light and a joyous countenance, I continued my course to lining-room; and I sat down to table a happier man I had been during many weeks before.

Moods of the mind, whether gay or melancholy, are r infectious, where persons who take a real interest in other's welfare are met together. We had not long seated, when the dejection which at first marked lotte's air, gradually cleared away, and she joined cheer-in the conversation, of which I was the prime mover he chief support. My father, too, seemed to have laid for a time his constitutional coldness, that he might the last evening of my sojourn an agreeable one; *d so affectionate was his* manner towards both Char-*nd myself, that had I* not been under the influence of

false excitement, that very affection would have stung me to the quick. I was, however, too happy in the discovery that my fears were without foundation, to permit any consideration of minor moment to ruffle me; and hence I acted and spoke, not like one about to quit a place endeared to him by the most tender associations, but as if the journey to be taken were one of pleasure.

"My father rallied me on this; Charlotte, too, threw out some hints which I could not misunderstand;—but I answered both in the same tone of levity, and then changed the subject.

"That the excitement might not abate, I drank wine profusely; and my father, though usually abstemious, encouraged me in so doing, by imitating my example. By and by, Charlotte quitted us. There was a slight flutter of the pulse as the door closed after her,—a slight sense of apprehension that a second trial was at hand; but nothing whatever occurring to justify the suspicion, I again became reassured; and we again plied the bottle, till I certainly and my father to all appearance, became considerably enlivened. But we broke up from our orgie at last, and following Charlotte to the saloon, the rest of the evening was spent in listening to Handel's exquisite music, rendered doubly sublime by being expressed in the tones worthy of the seraphim themselves.

"It was growing late, and all appeared to feel that the parting moment was come; for it was necessary for me to set out at an hour when few even of the domestics would be stirring. I did my best to appear calm; I even strove to keep up the gaiety of countenance which during the last hour or two had been worn in mockery of a heavy heart. Charlotte likewise struggled hard to repress her grief; and she succeeded so well, that not a tear burst from the lids beneath which a torrent lay imprisoned.

"My father was the first to speak. 'Good night, Charles,' said he, holding out his hand; 'there is nothing to be gained by prolonging a scene like this. Part we must, and though it be for a short time, to part is never agreeable. Go, kiss your mother—pooh—pooh—kiss Charlotte, and tell her not to break her heart, for you will return to us at *Christmas.*'

"I had replied to the squeeze of his hand, and was preparing to salute Charlotte, when the latter part of his speech attracted my notice. It had never been customary for me to visit home during any of the shorter vacations. These I usually spent either in Cambridge, or in town, or with some of my college friends, whose residences were not so remote as mine from the seat of learning; and the invitation to deviate now from an established practice, could not but forcibly strike me. I looked at my father suspiciously, but there was an air of absolute frankness about him which fully satisfied me that the invitation was not given invidiously. Still I hesitated how to answer him. God knows, my inclinations were not doubtful; had I acted as they pointed out, I should have at once closed with the proposition, no matter how pregnant with mischief; but there was an apprehension, suggested by conscience alone, lest my motives might be read, which caused me to appear undecided, if I really was not so.

"'You do not mean to deny us the pleasure of your company at Christmas?' asked my father; 'I am sure both Charlotte and I shall mope to death till we see you again. Try, my love, try your influence with this truant, who seems to quit his home with smiles, and looks forward to his return with tears.'

"Charlotte spoke. Her words were pronounced with difficulty, and the tone of her voice was low and plaintive; but it penetrated to my very heart, and put in jeopardy all my artificial composure. 'You will not reject your father's invitation?' said she; 'for my sake, not less than his, do not refuse him what he asks.'

"It was not without a desperate effort that I restrained myself; but I did restrain myself so far as to reply, in a tone meant to be that of indifference, that against such entreaties I could not think of standing out. I felt, however, that to dissemble much longer would be impossible. I accordingly took her hand, imprinted upon her cheek a cold, formal kiss, then snatching up my candle, hurried away to the privacy of my own apartment.

"I need not say that to me that was a night of intense and overwhelming misery. The steps which I had taken *to support my courage,* however effectual they might have

been at the moment, told, now that I was alone, fearfull against me; for the excitement produced by wine soo evaporated, and left me more than ever a prey to despor dency and self-reproach. I could not lie down; I di not so much as think of undressing; but, with a brain di tracted by a thousand fearful forebodings, and a fev raging through every vein, paced my chamber backwar and forwards, with the step of a maniac.

"Yet the images which passed through my mind th night, left no marked or definite form behind them. believe indeed that they were too wild to assume a definit form,—that they were rather the shadows of terrible idea than ideas themselves,—vague, indistinct, uncertain, poin ing to nothing tangible, nor resting upon any palpabl foundation, but painful as the operations of a confuse dream, when nothing more is remembered than that it wa the source of exquisite distress. The truth is, that thoug conscience might have told a hideous tale, I was not suff ciently brave to let her voice be heard. Had I possesse courage enough, or candour enough, to listen to th monitor, the cause of my agony would have been at onc displayed, and possibly all that followed might have bee avoided; but I closed my ears against a warning not which would have sounded harshly in proportion to its truth and I have paid the full penalty of my own weakness.

"I pass over the events which immediately followe partly because I myself retain of them but an indistinc recollection, and partly because, were the case otherwis the detail could excite no interest in the mind of a stranger Let it suffice to state, that morning found me thus oc cupied, not a single preparation having been made for m journey, and that when the arrival of the carriage was an nounced, I only began to take steps, which under othe circumstances would have been taken many hours before.

"Notwithstanding the delay thus occasioned, I saw nothing either of my father or Charlotte. I think thei usual hour of descending to the breakfast-room had arrive *previous to* my departure,—I am almost confident that i *had; yet they* made not their appearance, and the ver *shutters of* their apartments remained closed as I pass

under them. I did not look up again; on the contrary, I threw myself back in the chaise with the firm determination of forcing my thoughts into another channel:—how far I succeeded need not be told.

"At noon on the following day, I reached Cambridge; but how changed in every respect since last I traversed its venerable streets! I had been an enthusiast once in the studies of the place; I had aspired to the attainment of academic honours, and was not without a hope of succeeding to the utmost; whilst at the same time no man ever entered more freely into the gaieties, nor enjoyed more heartily the society of his fellow-students. Now I loathed them all: my books were neglected; my friends were avoided; I shut myself up in my chambers, a gloomy and discontented wretch, that I might ponder in solitude upon the single and horrible idea which began about this time to take possession of my mind.

"There are few ancient houses which have not a traditionary saying handed down from generation to generation, with which, in some way or other, the fate of the race is supposed to be connected. As I have already stated, ours was one of the oldest families in the north of England, as it had formerly been one of the most powerful; and we were not without our ominous prophecy, though when, or on what occasion spoken, I never heard. You must know that we bear as a device upon our shield, three young falcons, with a falcon likewise for our crest. Whether the rhyme has reference to these circumstances, no one presumed to say; but there was a distich well known in the family, which obtained an increased importance in consequence of the coincidence, and which was supposed to forbode, that at some period or other, the house of —— would become violently extinct. It was this:

> 'The —— of —— shall rue the hour
> When the young hawk harries the old hawk's bower.'

"I have said that this venerable distich was well known to every member of the family. It had been repeated to me a hundred *times, at least,* by my nurse; and even my *father, during an occasional* gleam of good humour, had *more than once alluded to it*; but, as may well be believed,

it never made upon me a greater impression than any other couplet of similar import and antiquity. Now, however, the case was different. I began to see it in the prophetic character which had all along been affixed to it by others. I took particular notice of its fitness, with reference to the armorial bearings of the house; and as the allusion could hardly be to an ordinary spoliation, my excited imagination was not slow in discovering another and more apt point of tendency. To speak out at once,—I fancied that the day of our house's downfall had come,—that I was the miscreant by whose sacrilegious means its ruin was to be effected,—that I had already harried the nest of my father, by stealing away the affections of his wife, and that the penalty threatened would not fail to be exacted.

"No language would do justice to the effect produced upon me by this hideous conviction. I have sat motionless during an entire morning, ruminating upon the prophecy, till all faith in the power of my own will to regulate my actions vanished; and I have risen, not furious, nor even excited, but calmly and deliberately convinced, that there was a path before me in which I could not avoid to walk, though the precipice to which it conducted was not for an instant concealed.

"It was not customary between my father and myself to keep up any frequent or regular epistolary communication. In case either party had business to transact with the other then indeed the usual silence was broken; but letters of affection merely had never passed between us, from the hour at which I first quitted home for school. Under these circumstances, I had no right to expect that any notice of what might be passing at ———— would be transmitted to me; and as often as I permitted sober reason to exert her powers this truth failed not to come conspicuously into view. But sober reason possesses but a very interrupted, as well as feeble influence, over a mind engrossed by one tumultuous and fatal passion. Morning after morning, I examined my breakfast-table for that which was not, and ought not to *have been* looked for there; and on each occasion I felt as *if some serious injury* had been done, such as I was justified

in desiring to revenge. In short, I ceased either to think or act like a man in his senses,—I became to all intents and purposes, insane.

"Slowly and drearily the time rolled on; but, slow and dreary as was its progress, it drew gradually to a close. It was now that a wild joy, scarcely more endurable than the despair which preceded it, began to assert its supremacy over me. In a few days more I should be again an inhabitant of the same dwelling with her to whom I felt myself bound by ties stronger than any human connexion acknowledges; and what to me was every consideration besides? I was no longer master of myself. The subject of a prophecy—marked out by destiny itself for one particular course—how was it possible for me to avoid my fate? and though that fate should envelop in it the ultimate misery both of myself and those most dear to me, how was I answerable? Such were the strange thoughts which pressed themselves upon me with an energy not to be resisted, and such the frame of mind into which I had fallen, when I once more quitted the university for the place of my birth.

"It was a clear frosty morning, the sun was shining brightly, and the earth, covered with a coat of hard crisp snow, was glittering as if overspread with diamonds, when I arrived at the well-remembered lodge. The gate was opened, as it had been before, by the pretty country girl, who, as formerly, dropped me her neatest courtesy as the carriage rolled through; nor could my eye discover any alteration in the form and aspect of things around, greater than the change of season was calculated to produce. There was something satisfactory in this; why I knew not; but as the postilion drove at the full speed of his horses, though even then at a pace tedious and wearisome to my impatience, I felt as composed and happy as a man can be under such circumstances. By and by, the wicket was passed and the turning made, and I was once more in front of the home of my fathers. It was now for the first time, when the sound of the bell smote upon *my* ear, that my heart fluttered violently; *indeed, so great was* my agitation, that, after the *door had been opened* and the steps let down, I found con

siderable difficulty in alighting. I exerted myself, however, strenuously to hide this agitation, and strove to assume, as I proceeded, an air of extreme composure, with so much success that the peculiar expression of the servant's countenance as he looked me in the face, though noticed plainly enough, did not discompose me.

"'Your master and mistress are well, I hope?' said I, in what I meant to be a careless tone.

"'My master is well, sir,' said the man, 'but—'

"'But what?' exclaimed I, forgetting in a moment the resolution which I had just formed. 'Speak out, man, at once—your mistress—'

"'Has been extremely ill for some weeks past,' replied he, 'and is now, I fear, at the point of death.'

"I heard no more. I threw my hat upon the table, and brushing past the servant, ran with the speed of thought up stairs. In an instant I was at the door of her apartment: it was ajar; and without considering the consequences which might accrue, I pushed it open. There was no attendant in waiting. The curtains were drawn closely round the bed; and the blinds let down, with the shutters half closed, threw a dismal light over the chamber. There was a dull noise, too, as of one who breathed with difficulty or in a slumber; and a slight movement of the bed-clothes served to indicate that the former, not the latter, was the cause. Maddened with apprehensions, I knew not of what, I hastily pulled back the hangings: it was a desperate deed, and desperately done; but it roused the sufferer from her lethargy. She opened her eyes, they fell upon my countenance, and I was immediately recognised. One shriek told this—a shriek shrill, loud, terrible;—there was an effort, too, to rise—a movement as if to meet the embrace which was offered, but it failed. Before my extended arms could reach her, she fell back upon the pillow—she was dead.

"I saw this, yet I saw it with eyes dry as they are now. I looked upon her pale, smooth forehead, beautiful even in death; yet not a drop fell from my burning balls;—and I *kissed her cold* lips, calmly, as I would have kissed the block *of marble.* I had no power to weep; but, had the case been *otherwise,* the fountain of my tears would have been instant

congealed by the scene which followed. I was gazing upon the wreck of all that once was lovely and loveable, when a hand laid roughly upon my shoulder, caused me to turn round. My father stood beside me. There was an expression in his face of every evil passion by which the human heart is capable of being wrung; hatred, malice, pride, fury,—triumph likewise, hellish triumph, was in his eye, as he looked sometimes at the corpse of his wife, and sometimes at his son.

"'Wretch!' said he at last, 'behold thy handiwork! Look at that frail but beautiful image, and know that thy villany has wrought this deed—thy villany, I say, thine! Think you that I could not see through the flimsy disguise with which you sought to blind me? Think you that my eye was not upon you in all your lonely walks and secret meetings? Have I not witnessed your warm embracings, heard your protestations, watched your very looks, read your very thoughts? Villain! traitor! miscreant! begone. Quit my presence for ever; and may the curse of a father weigh upon your spirit, till it drag you to the earth!'

"There was a spell upon me which I could not resist even for a moment. I heard him out—I heard him pronounce a sentence which I felt to be just,—and I saw that fate had accomplished its purpose. With a deliberate step, I quitted the chamber of the dead. I spoke to no one, but, hurrying from the house, became from that hour a wanderer and an outcast. I would have committed suicide, had I possessed the power; but on more occasions than one I found that the power to die, at least by my own hand, was denied me. In this plight, I wandered from place to place, sleeping under sheds and in barns, but shunning as much as possible every inhabited spot, till chance, or the fatality which has guided me from my birth, brought me to Braeburn Lees. I had been then for several weeks a vagabond; my money was expended; and even my clothes had been in part disposed of to procure the means of subsistence; when the idea of enlisting as a common soldier occurred to me. I obeyed it; and with the consequences which have followed *you are already acquainted.*"

CHAPTER V.

THE last gleam of daylight served only to render the characters of this manuscript visible, and departed almost as soon as I had finished the perusal. I leave you to judge of the effect which that perusal produced upon me. If I felt interested in the fate of the unhappy youth before, my interest was now increased a hundred-fold; and I rose from the ground fully bent upon saving him from the degradation of the lash, at all hazards. I determined, indeed, should other measures fail, to put the manuscript itself into the hands of the commanding officer, who could not possess the common feelings of a man, yet inflict so debasing a punishment upon the writer. Full of this notion, I made all haste to the cantonments; and I reached them just in time to ascertain, that the colonel had set out an hour before upon a visit to General Craufurd, and that he was not expected to return before midnight.

It was with a sensation of no ordinary disappointment, that I turned my back upon his quarters.

My first idea was to sit up till he should return, and then at every risk to force my way into his presence, and plead the young man's cause as vehemently as I felt it. But a minute's reflection served to convince me, that with a man of his temperament, such a course, so far from being productive of good, would only bring about much evil. That he would refuse to listen to my story, I knew the individual too well not to believe; or if he did listen, it would be in that frame of mind to which a man gives way, when, having made up his mind how to act, he nevertheless consents to hear the justice of his decision denied, or its policy called in question. That scheme was therefore abandoned almost as soon as it had been formed. But between it and permitting things to take their course, one only alternative remained, and to that, after considerable doubts as to its *efficacy,* I made up my mind to have recourse. It was our

m at this time, as it invariably is with the divisions in
front of an army, to get under arms every morning an
before dawn; and I determined to make use of that
hing space for the purpose of making the colonel aware
l the circumstances which had affected myself so
y.

thing occurred that night, either to myself or Jackson,
y of repetition; the latter sent no message to me, nor,
as I could ascertain, took any other step, to forward his
nterests, but waited in silent indifference the issues of
orrow, be they what they might. As I afterwards
, indeed, he appeared not unaware of the nature of the
ice which was awarded him; yet, with a coolness for
it would not be easy to account, sat down satisfied un-
e weight of his destiny. For myself, I retired to bed at
ual hour, and though for a time anxiety kept me awake,
gradually asserted its influence, and I slept soundly.

was dark as pitch when the orderly-sergeant entered
om to say, that the regiment was getting under arms.
ng to my feet at the first summons, and hastily dressing
f, sallied forth to take my station at the head of my
my: in five minutes after, a close column was formed
the brow of the height, on which the corps remained
ylight began to appear; when the men being ordered
their arms, the officers were permitted to fall out, and
et in groups, as was their custom, on the flank of the
ion.

w was my time for bringing forward Jackson's case;
did not neglect it. I hastened to the spot where the
l stood, being resolved at once to entreat his perusal
young man's narrative; but before I could reach him
l-de-camp rode up, and my opportunity was lost. The
-camp said only a few words and then rode on,—but
were words of moment, for the colonel instantly
ted his horse, and ordered the regiment to stand to its

This was of course done, and done promptly; but
e after minute passing by, and nothing of moment oc-
g, the colonel seemed to doubt the correctness of the
nation which he had just received, and, having warned
n not to straggle, nor take off their accoutrements till

further notice, he dismissed the parade. In an instant all hurried back to their quarters, and addressed themselves in good earnest to their morning meal.

Another opportunity was now presented to me, of which I gladly availed myself. Having waited till I saw the colonel enter his quarters, I hastened after him, and, though no especial favourite, was not refused admission. The first sentence that I uttered, however, was all to which he would listen.

"Captain Chakot," said he, sternly, "I heard your intercession in favour of that man yesterday, and I told you at the moment how I intended to act. I have only to add that, were he my own brother, he should receive the full amount of his sentence."

I would have still persisted in my suit, holding out at the same time the packet; but he made a motion with his hand that I should desist, and would listen to me no further. I walked away, more than half desirous to learn that Jackson had deserted.

No fresh alarm occurring, and the time appointed for the punishment being arrived, the bugles sounded. The call on such occasions is seldom obeyed with much alacrity; for, however obnoxious a criminal may be, there are few indeed who take pleasure in the spectacle which a military punishment presents; nor was the regiment more active in assembling now than at other and similar moments. But it did assemble in due time. A square was then formed, the officers standing in the centre; and in a few minutes after, the prisoner was introduced under the charge of the guard.

There was now a solemn and fearful silence, whilst the colonel giving the word "attention!" proceeded to read aloud the minutes and sentence of the court. These were listened to by the regiment with an involuntary shudder; by the prisoner with an intensity of feeling, which all his assumed composure failed to conceal. His cheeks were flushed, his lip quivered, his eye rolled round the assembly, as if its movements were beyond the influence of his own control; and his limbs, though they did not quiver, were restless and *uneasy, like the* fore-feet of a hunter when checked as the *view-halloo is* given. No sooner, however, had the reading

eased, than he resumed, as if by magic, a perfect command f himself, and turned upon his commanding officer a glance, beneath which the eye of the latter, though bold and proud, eemed to quiver. "You have heard your sentence, sir," aid the colonel, "and now I have only to observe, that were you my nearest relative, not one lash of the number awarded you should be abated. Strip, sir!"

"Never!" replied Jackson haughtily. "Had I been guilty of any crime against God or man, I should have submitted quietly even to this;—but circumstanced as I am, the lash at least shall leave no debasing mark upon me." As he uttered these words, he sprang with the agility of a roe from the party surrounding him, and rushed furiously and desperately against the levelled bayonets of the square. In an instant, the firelock of one man was wrenched from his grasp; and consequences the most fatal must have ensued, had not the attention of all, not even excepting the prisoner himself, been suddenly drawn away by a sound the nature of which there was no possibility of mistaking. It was the report, first, of a solitary cannon, then of three others in rapid succession, and then, of a heavy and unintermitting roar of musketry. There required no messenger to assure us that the enemy was coming on. The colonel found time only to desire that the prisoner, who was again in custody, might be securely led to the rear, ere a mounted officer, breathless and covered with dust, arrived upon the ground; and the battalion breaking hastily into column, pushed forward to assume its station in the line.

I need scarcely remind you, that at the period to which my present narrative refers, Ciudad Rodrigo, after an obstinate defence, had fallen into the hands of the French, who in overwhelming numbers threatened an immediate advance upon the Portuguese capital. For some days past, indeed, they had been making movements sufficiently indicative that the movement of re-opening the campaign in real earnest was not very distant; and the British army had, in consequence, been kept in a condition for moving at the shortest notice. So lately as the 21st, they had pushed forward a *strong column* both of infantry and cavalry, *which, occupying Valdelamula*, St. Pedro, and Villa For-

mosa, had caused our people to abandon and blow up the fort of Conception; and now our most advanced corps lay resting its left upon Almeida, with its right, as well as its rear, covered by the Coa. Into that line we were pushed, and we took post in the centre, having a battalion of caçadores on each flank, and the rocky bed of the river immediately behind us.

We had not assumed our alignement many minutes, when one of the most interesting military spectacles which it has been my good fortune to behold, opened upon us. Three British pickets, two of infantry, one of cavalry, had been posted considerably in advance of Almeida—about half way indeed between that fortress and the village of Villamula. These having been attacked by an overwhelming force of the enemy, were of course compelled to fall back, and they now appeared, slowly and regularly retiring, before a perfect swarm of tirailleurs, supported by dense columns both of horse and foot. Nothing could exceed the cool and orderly manner in which that retrogression was conducted. Their retreat lay over a level plain, intersected here and there by hedges, stone walls, and enclosures, behind each of which, as it occurred, our people resolutely maintained themselves, till the enemy, extending far beyond their flanks, began to threaten them in rear, when they were again under the necessity of running back, as quickly as they could, to the next cover. Nor was it to infantry alone that those brave men were opposed. As soon as the country began to open sufficiently for cavalry to act, several squadrons of French dragoons dashing forward, made various attempts to intercept our people as they retreated from hedge to hedge, and from wall to wall,—insomuch that on more than one occasion the skirmishers were compelled to throw themselves into circles, and to withstand a charge as they best might. They were not, however, uniformly successful here. Some prisoners were unfortunately taken, and several brave men sabred; till at last the pickets found that further opposition was useless, and they fell back behind the division, now drawn out to receive the enemy.

The French, finding us in position along the brow of the height, paused for a few minutes, as if to give their generals

time to reconnoitre our arrangements and to complete their own. That was a moment of deep and extraordinary interest, when, the firing having ceased, the hostile lines stood opposed to one another, in all the pomp and majesty of war in its most magnificent array; and many a bosom beat with anxiety and proud daring, which within an hour was destined to cease beating for ever.

But the pause, though strikingly fine, was not of long continuance. The French, sending off two lesser bodies to amuse the regiments on our flanks, drew up opposite to our centre an immense column of infantry, supported, and in some degree intermixed, with several masses of cavalry; and then, having saluted us with a warm discharge from thirteen or fourteen pieces of cannon, pressed forward with a fury which we found it no easy matter to withstand. Of the events which immediately followed, I can offer no minute or accurate description; I saw only the flashes of our own and of the enemy's muskets, and heard but the roar of fire-arms, like the rolling of a drum,—whilst a smoke dense as the heaviest fog that ever darkened the city of London, soon rendered every object beyond my immediate front invisible.

In this state things continued for perhaps ten minutes; the increasing brilliancy of the fire from the head of the enemy's column proving that it drew every instant nearer and nearer. Our ranks, not very numerously supplied at the first, were now sadly thinned, and the tremendous shower of bullets thrown in upon us rendered it continually thinner; when a sort of wild cry from the French, not a shout, but a confused commingling of voices in all tones, and without any regularity, gave notice that they were about to bring their bayonets to the charge. I cannot accuse our men of want of courage at the very moment when I confess that they declined the challenge. Outnumbered to an immense degree, two-thirds of their original strength cut off, or dispersed with the wounded, it was not to be expected that a single battalion would meet the rush of at least five thousand men, cheered forward, as these were, by the knowledge that a numerous cavalry was on their flank, ready to act with them. Our people gave way. There were no means

of rallying them; no point indeed at which we could halt on this side the river; so we fled in extreme confusion towards the bridge, by which alone the Coa could be crossed.

It was well for us at this juncture that the pickets, having formed in our rear, and being joined by parties from other corps, were enabled to oppose so much of a second line as to cover our retreat. Had it not been so, we must, to a man, have surrendered or been cut to pieces; for the bridge, when we reached it, was literally choked up with fugitives, the Portuguese having fled some time before we gave way; and as it was, our reserve being fully driven in, the enemy were enabled to bring some guns to bear upon us, from the fire of which we suffered severely. Nevertheless the passage was, in the end, made good; and then having halted among some rocks and woods and broken ground, which overhung the opposite banks, we again faced about to resist any attempts which might be made to pursue us further. These, however, were neither numerous nor desperate. Some squadrons of cavalry did indeed charge boldly towards the bridge, pushing a troop across but that troop was cut to pieces by a division of German hussars, and the fire of our artillery checked the remainder.

The cavalry being thus driven back, a few minutes pause ensued, during which General Craufurd, and the officers of his staff, rode along our line, encouraging the men by their voices, and minutely examining their arrangement. In the mean while the enemy having re-formed their solid column, began to crown the ridge of the opposite height, and showed as if it were their intention to force the passage of the bridge, and carry our position by assault; but they never once arrived within the reach of musketry.

No sooner had the mass begun to move, than our artillery opened their fire, and with a precision far surpassing anything of which I could have formed a conception. First their shrapnells striking full into the centre of the column, caused large gaps to appear; then came the case and grape-shot, literally sweeping down whole sections, till the enemy, panic-struck, first halted, then wavered, then fled over the ridge in the greatest confusion. This was the last effort

made to drive us from our new alignement. Though the smoke from their bivouac showed that they still hovered near, no further attempt was made to pass the Coa; and we, following their example, caused our men to pile their arms, and lay down to rest about our watch-fires.

It was not, however, General Craufurd's design to await a renewal of the attack; to which, indeed, he had exposed himself in direct opposition to the wishes of Lord Wellington. His business was to fall back with as little delay as possible upon the main body; and that he made ready to accomplish as soon as a fitting opportunity should arrive. With this view our people were commanded, as soon as darkness set in, to heap quantities of fresh fuel upon their fires; and then stealing one by one so far to the rear as that the blaze should not betray them, the different regiments formed quickly but silently into columns of march. That done, the guns, baggage, stores, and wounded, were sent off, and then battalion after battalion, leaving a brief interval between the head of one and the cue of the other, took the road to Alverca.

There remains but little for me to add connected with the fate of the Gentle Recruit. Our columns having reached their new ground without molestation, and the enemy evincing no disposition to follow them up, ample time was afforded for mustering the several battalions, and ascertaining the amount of our loss. When the regiment to which I was attached paraded, it was found that, among many others absent without leave, Jackson was not to be found. What had become of him, no one appeared accurately to know. It was ascertained, indeed, that when the firing grew sharp, and the guard was called away to join their comrades, the prisoner, instead of embracing the opportunity of escape, hastily threw on his accoutrements, and followed. That he took part in the action, therefore, no one could doubt; but whether he fell, or was taken prisoner, or fled into the woods when our line was broken, remained a mystery. Nor was the mystery ever solved from that day to this. His name was given in amongst the list of missing, and he was neither seen nor heard of afterwards.

MAJOR CHAKOT'S story being brought to a close, the company expressed themselves deeply interested by its details, and the relator's health was again drunk with the usual honours; after which, a general desire began to show itself, that, as the customary hour of breaking up was still distant, some other member of the mess would favour them with a legend. This was no sooner done, than all eyes were turned towards the president, who seemed by no means disinclined to accept the challenge. He sat more erect than ever in his chair, filled his glass with great formality, then passed the bottle.

"I cannot possibly refuse," said he, "to obey the wishes of the company, having myself so lately required obedience in another. My tales, however, as you well know, refer chiefly to other times; nevertheless, if you be content to listen to such as my budget contains, it shall very readily be spread out before you."

A general cry of "Go on, go on!" followed this brief peroration; after which Major Cohorn began as follows.

A DAY

ON

THE NEUTRAL GROUND.

A DAY

ON

THE NEUTRAL GROUND.

CHAPTER I.

It is well known to every one at all conversant with the details of the American Revolutionary war, that at the period when the British troops occupied New York, and the army of General Washington its position in the Jersey highlands, a considerable extent of country, situated to the east of the Hudson river, and supposed to measure at least fifty or sixty miles across, was recognised under the somewhat problematical title of the Neutral Ground. Whence it obtained this appellation, it is scarcely necessary to mention. The regular outposts of the King's army extending but a little way in front of Kingsbridge, whilst those of the republicans came not below Peekskill, a permanent superiority over the intervening country could not be claimed by either party; and hence, rather than on account of any recognised exemption from the evils consequent upon a state of war, a denomination was conferred upon it, of the privileges supposed to belong to which its inhabitants knew nothing.

Partly, perhaps, in consequence of the natural advantages of its situation, being washed on one side by the waters of the sea, and on the other by those of the magnificent Hudson, and partly because its early settlers were

men of patient and industrious habits, this district had long been conspicuous, even in the province of New York, for its extreme fertility and highly civilized appearance. The original forest had been everywhere cleared away; there arose in its room fertile fields, green meadows, blooming orchards, and neat plantations; several flourishing villages likewise sprang up, some of them near the margin of the sea, and others more inland; whilst cottages, farm-houses and even villas and gentlemen's seats, were scattered in great numbers over its surface. These, of themselves, were objects upon which, at this early period of American history, the eye of the traveller delighted to rest, but they composed not the only feature in the landscape which entitled it to the appellation of beautiful. There is much variety of scenery here,—hill and valley, rock and plain breaking in frequently and with exquisite irregularity, one upon another. Indeed it would not be easy to point out any district, throughout the compass of the Union, at once more luxuriant and more romantic.

I have said that the district in question was known by the title, its claim to which rested upon very equivocal grounds. It is true that a large proportion of its inhabitants, either guided by personal attachments, or held in check by fear, affected to take no part whatever in the struggle to which they were witnesses: they remained quietly in their houses and with a show of equal hospitality received whatever wanderers from either army might chance to visit them. But, if in these respects the belligerent powers condescended to recognise their assumed rights, it must be confessed that there were others over which these rights were permitted to hold very little influence. The unfortunate population of the Neutral Ground lay exposed to constant annoyances and insults. Their fields offered a convenient foraging ground, not only to the King's but to the Congress's troopers; their sheep-pens and cattle-folds were equally accessible to marauders from the city or from the camp; whilst the Cow-boys, not less frequently than the Skinners, eased them of such articles of household stuff as happened to take the fancy of these lawless robbers.

Into this district it was customary for the officers belong

ing to General Clinton's army more especially, with such a chance to occupy the lines at Kingsbridge and Morrisiana to make frequent excursions. Fields well stocked with quails and red-legged partridges, held out inducements to the sportsman not to be resisted. A variety of streams and rivulets in which trout abounded, produced a similar effect upon the angler; and even the idler was too well pleased to exercise himself in the open country and at a distance from the tumult of a barrack-yard, not to incur some hazard in the pursuit of that enjoyment. You will not be surprised to learn that these wanderings were not always accomplished without considerable risk to such as undertook them.

It was on a fine morning in September, in the year 1781, that two young officers belonging to the garrison of Kingsbridge set out upon a sporting expedition into the Neutral Ground. The sportsmen were cousins-german: they had been companions in childhood, had received their education at the same school, and, having entered the army within a brief interval the one of the other, they now held commissions in the same corps. Having premised this, it is scarcely necessary to add, that they were sincerely and warmly attached to one another; yet were they in temper, disposition, manners, habits, and pursuits, as dissimilar as any two persons could be.

Oliver Beckwith, the elder of the two, was of a grave, sedate, and perhaps reserved turn of mind; correct in his proceedings, and guarded in his conversation, he rarely gave offence, even casually, to those among whom he lived; and if few entertained for him any thing like enthusiastic friendship, all who knew him both respected and esteemed him. His cousin Harry, on the other hand, was volatile, impetuous, rash, and even headstrong. Warmhearted and generous, he was, however, too completely the slave of impulse, not to rush continually into scrapes for which his feelings continually upbraided him. Whilst his professed wish was always to do right, and to secure the good will of those about him, he not unfrequently found that he had done wrong, and stirred up their animosity. Harry was one of those upon whom men cannot look with an eye of indifference. Among his friends, and he had many, he was adored.

lively, pleasant, high-spirited and witty, his society eagerly courted; whilst his very failings were all attri to a mere excess of qualities intrinsically good, but impro regulated. But Harry had likewise his enemies, and pronounced him to be hollow-hearted, selfish, and insin and it must be confessed that not a few of his procee formed at least a plausible ground on which to rest this serious accusation.

With respect to the personal appearance of these rela enough is done when I inform you, that it corresponded much to the account which has just been given of their ners and dispositions. They were both tall and well r they were both possessed of regular features, and both haps, merited the appellation of handsome; yet were expressions as unlike as their habits, the countenan each being a pretty fair indicator of the turn of mind produced it. Thus, Oliver, with his fair complexion quiet blue eye, could never be mistaken for other t mild-tempered and well-behaved young man; whils dark hue of his cousin's cheek, and the sparkling glar his hazel eye, told a tale of both considerable levity a deep and overmastering passion.

The fall of the year, as our relatives of America desi its two or three latter months, is beyond all compariso most delightful season in the province of New York; an morning on which these young men made ready for enterprise, was as lovely as ever shone from the hea The sun was just rising into a sky of the clearest and de blue, and the air was mild yet bracing; the sea, g agitated by the breeze, broke with a ceaseless murmur the shore; and the larks' sweet music thrilled from unseen dwellings in the ether;—when the two young n have described, the one armed with a fowling-piece other with a rod and basket, sallied forth from their dwelling within the lines. A couple of dogs gamboled b them, barking loudly, to express their joy at being thus released from confinement. A black boy, carrying a g basket on his back, followed;—and all, masters, servant dogs, pushed forward in the highest spirits, and in the possible humour.

ıd whither must we direct our steps to-day?" said the
f the two relatives to his companion, as they passed
ranced sentries, and entered fairly upon the Neutral
l.

the old beat, I suppose," replied his cousin, with a
indifference. "I know no district in the county better
with birds, and the stream has never failed to afford
ellent sport."

t is it prudent, think you to venture so far from home?
are not now as they were a year ago; that unhappy
f André's has made the Rebels a thousand degrees
n the alert, and ought likewise to make us more
s."

oh, pooh!" argued the younger of the two; "if we were
to listen to the whispers of prudence, human life
urnish few sources either of advancement or pleasure.
ay the Yankees are not rendered bolder by the dis-
that all their officers are not to be trusted; they are
refore, likely to visit the Neutral Ground more fre-
."

t is it only on account of the birds and fishes that you
hat beat?" asked the elder with an arch look.

hy, what else should attract me?" replied his com-
a slight flush passing over his cheek.

, I cannot pretend to say, only I thought it just
that a brace of bright eyes might have as great a
drawing you thither as a brace of quails."

w, Oliver," replied his cousin, "if I were of a hasty
which, thank God! I am not, I should be strongly
to quarrel with you for making that allusion.
not told you a hundred times, at least, that the girl
ng to me? It is very true that I think her pretty,
reeable and lively; and that a little innocent flirta-
and always was, a favourite amusement of mine; but
eally suppose that I entertain for her any serious at-
nt, I tell you, once for all, that you are confound-
staken."

n, my dear Harry," replied his cousin, with greater
ess than he had yet used, "allow me to say that
haviour is not what it ought to be; and far fro[illegible]

being worthy of yourself. I do not understand the meaning of that phrase, 'innocent flirtation.' You have paid the young lady attentions so marked, that if you mean nothing by them, you have done both to her and yourself serious wrong; for rest assured that she does not regard them as matters of mere 'innocent flirtation.'"

"Now there you are again," replied the younger, "always harping on one string, continually giving lectures on propriety, and decorum, and honour, and I know not what. In heaven's name what would you have me do? Am I not to speak pretty to a nice girl when I meet with her, especially if I chance to find that she has no objection to my conversation?"

"There is a prodigious difference between what you are pleased to term 'speaking pretty,' replied Oliver, "and dancing close attendance on a young woman for months together."

"And what if I do dance close attendance, as you call it, upon a girl whom I happen to admire?" replied Harry angrily; "is it any one's business besides my own?"

"It is surely the business of the girl so attended," answered his cousin drily.

"Well, and if she happen to like this attendance, who has any right to interfere?"

"Your own principles and sense of honour, Harry; unless indeed you have a definite object in view."

"In heaven's name, Oliver, what would you desire? Can there be any impropriety in cultivating the acquaintance of either man or woman for its own sake merely? You are becoming more and more rigid every day;—there is, really, no bearing with your code of stern morality!"

"Be patient, Harry," replied Oliver, "and do not permit that hasty temper of yours to blind you to the dictates of your better judgment. Certainly, there is no harm whatever in cultivating the acquaintance either of man or woman for its own sake merely; but can you so far deceive yourself as to suppose for one moment that your conduct in this case comes under the head to which you would reduce it? Let me remind you of a few plain matters of fact. Upwards of

a year has elapsed since chance brought you as a guest into the family of a man, who certainly treated you with no common kindness, and endangered his own safety to secure yours. It was under these circumstances that you first saw his daughter—a beautiful girl, I allow, and not more beautiful than amiable and accomplished; and it was no more than natural that you, a warm-hearted and generous youth, should be amazingly pleased with her. You paid her then the most marked attention; and you permitted but a few days to intervene after your escape to the lines, before you returned to thank both her and her father, for their hospitality. This likewise was quite natural,—indeed it was highly proper. But is it either natural or proper to visit them continually, at the risk of your life or liberty—not on account of the father, for he, as you well know, seldom enters into your thoughts,—but that you may speak soft things to the daughter; and that too, meaning nothing all the while? Why, Harry, I know no character so despicable as that of a man who can trifle with the affections of a young and artless girl,—I do not say as you intend to do, but as you certainly are doing, with those of Cecily."

"By heavens, Oliver," replied Harry, warmly, "you presume both upon our relationship and our early friendship too much. There is not another man breathing who would dare to speak to me thus; nor will I bear more of it, even from you. What if I have some design in view; can that possibly interest you, or entitle you to read me lectures as if I were a schoolboy?"

"Yes, Harry," replied his cousin, "it can and does interest me deeply. For heaven's sake, take no rash step, nor make any rash promises. I am sure that Cecily Morgan is all that is pure and excellent; and that, choose whom you may, you are not likely to find one better calculated to make you happy. But consider how you stand in other respects. Your private fortune is very limited, and your pay a mere pittance; whilst the state of the country renders it at least highly improbable that Mr. Morgan can portion his daughter largely. To marry under such circumstances would be an act of insanity; whilst to encumber yourself

with an engagement, of the speedy fulfilment of which there is no probability, would be to the full as imprudent."

"Marry!" ejaculated Harry contemptuously, "I am too old a bird to be caught in that springe yet a while."

Oliver stopped short as soon as this sentence caught his ear. He cast a stern look upon his relative, who, though clearly quailing under it, nevertheless strove to meet it with a bold front;—and after a pause of several seconds exclaimed:

"I did not, I could not comprehend you, Harry. It is impossible that the friend of my youth, whom I have loved as a very second self, can be a deliberate and hardened villain!"

When our conscience tells us, that the plain-speaking of a monitor expresses nothing but the truth, we are more frequently driven to take offence at his candour, than to profit by his reproofs. On the present occasion, Harry Beckwith, whilst he writhed internally under the lash of his cousin's exclamation, either forgot, or pretended to forget, that it could have no force, unless his own designs created it. A flush of rage rushed into his cheek,—his eye shot fire, as, clenching his fist, and stamping violently on the ground with his foot, he cried in a voice inarticulate from agitation—

"Oliver Beckwith, did you apply the epithet 'villain' to me?"

"No," replied his cousin calmly, but in a tone of absolute resolution: "I did not apply that epithet to you. On the contrary, I expressed my conviction that I had misunderstood you when you seemed to apply it to yourself."

"This is mere trifling, sir," answered Harry fiercely: "I insist upon an explanation more explicit, or upon the satisfaction of a gentleman."

"Harry," replied the elder cousin, "is it to me that you talk of satisfaction? or is it from me that you demand an explanation which one hint will always procure? What have I said or done to annoy you? I have but stated my conviction, and I state it again, that the friend of my youth cannot be so base a villain as to meditate the ruin of an innocent girl, to whose father he is indebted for his life."

"And who said that I meditated any thing of the kind?" said Harry.

"What other construction am I to put upon your words, cousin? You first own that you have a decided object in view, with regard to Cecily Morgan; and then speak of marriage as a thing totally out of the question."

"Cousin Oliver," replied Harry, becoming gradually more calm, "let us drop this subject of conversation, which is not likely to lead to any good, and may bring about some evil result. Take my advice for once, and whilst you pursue your own amusements, in which, I never seek to baulk you, leave me to follow mine equally unembarrassed. You forget that there is only a difference of one year in our ages, and that I am old enough to direct my own proceedings."

"Harry," replied his cousin in a tone of deep feeling, "this assumed indifference is infinitely more painful to me than your anger. I say assumed, for I cannot believe even now, that you are so lost to all that is good, and noble, and just, as to harbour the black design of which your own lips have accused you. But if it be so, remember, that not only shall your infamous project be thwarted,—not only shall you be exposed to the hatred and derision of all good men; but the moment which brings home to you the justice of the charge, shall be the last of our acquaintance. Speak out at once, then, and let me hear from your own lips that you are still what I have hitherto believed you,—impetuous and volatile, and perhaps wayward at times,—but not a villain."

This address seemed for a moment to produce some effect upon the individual to whom it was directed; but the softer feelings which struggled for ascendancy, soon ceased to work. Pride, or a worse passion, maintained its ground. "I am not aware," replied he after a brief pause, "upon what plea you make this demand, or how you can establish the right to enforce it; and I am not in the habit of doing any thing without having ascertained why it should be done. You will therefore excuse me for saying, that I neither will nor can make protestations, the use and object of which are to me equally unknown."

"Then we part company on the spot," replied turning round as he spoke:—"I will not so far for is due to myself, as again to be seen in Mr. Morga as the companion of one who leaves me to suspec meditates the destruction of his host's domestic p return to the lines."

"Please yourself, good cousin," said Harry in asumed gaiety. "Unless you choose to make your agreeable than you have yet done since we set sooner we part company the better."

He, too, turned round as he spoke; and without sc wishing one another good morning, the relatives s

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CHAPTER II.

It was with a tardy step and a heavy heart, th Beckwith, at the conclusion of the scene just desc rected his course towards the lines at Kingsbridg a moment or two after parting from his wayward sense of outraged rectitude, if not of wounded pri to reconcile him to what had passed; but as the between him and the offender increased, his indigna dually subsided, till at last a feeling diametrically to that which had caused the quarrel, arose wi Had not he himself been somewhat too hasty? W to conclude from a mere passing remark—a remar too in a tone which sufficiently indicated that th either spoke not his real sentiments, or desired t sentiments should not be noticed,—was it fair to upon such evidence, that the friend of his youth, brother of his affections, was become all at once of the regard which had hitherto been lavished u There was not a solitary act in the whole of his co career which authorized him to charge him now sign so hellish as the deliberate seduction of the da his preserver. True, Harry's conduct with regard

was not always unobjectionable. But of an act of base and deliberate villany Harry had never yet been found guilty: was it therefore probable that he would make his *début* in a line so despicable, under circumstances like the present? The thing was not to be credited for a minute. Oliver had wronged his cousin, wronged him cruelly and barbarously—it was not surprising that an honourable youth accused of a design of which he was utterly incapable, should become too indignant even to contradict it.

Such were the young man's reflections as he walked slowly and painfully towards the point, from which, little more than an hour ago, he had sallied forth so joyously.

It has been stated that at this stage of the American war, the British officers stationed within the lines at New York were in the constant habit of making incursions, not always the best regulated, into the Neutral Ground. From the time of his first arrival to join Sir H. Clinton's corps, Harry Beckwith was noted for the daring perseverance with which he indulged in these perilous expeditions. A keen sportsman both with the gun and rod,—a youth, too, of more than ordinary courage, the suggestion that an enemy's patrol was abroad, or a party of Skinners on the range, seemed only to send him with double zest upon his pleasurable excursion.

At first, however as usually happens in such cases, Harry Beckwith's excursions were neither so bold nor so extensive, as he represented them to be. The village of East Chester formed, for the most part, the extreme landmark, beyond which he ventured not to stray; whilst to penetrate as far as Rye, was regarded as an undertaking of no common hardihood. But as day after day passed by, without bringing before him any appearance of danger in reality, the little prudence which had hitherto directed his movements ceased to operate; and he wandered on far beyond the reach of assistance from his friends, or the possibility of escape by any personal exertions from his enemies.

It was on one of these occasions that he was indebted for his safety to the kindness of a stranger,—to the father of the very girl, concerning his designs upon whom the late discussion between his relative and himself had occurred.

It is not necessary to give a very detailed account of th adventure; let it suffice to state, that having strayed co siderably beyond his ordinary bounds, Beckwith fou himself suddenly encompassed by flying parties from t American army, of whose approach the wooded and unev nature of the country hindered him from becoming awa He was busily engaged with his rod, on the bank of a lit rivulet, which wound through the bottom of one of th exquisite valleys that give a character to the scenery in t neighbourhood of Bedford. Two gentle hills leaning sp the one from the other, and feathered to their summits wi birch and locust trees, closed in that glen on either hand whilst here and there a ledge of rock, or a patch of under wood, interposing both above and below, rendered the pros pect from any given spot extremely limited. It was onl the sound of their voices indeed, and the trampling of horse hoofs, which warned Beckwith of the approach of the Ame rican foragers; and he had barely time to screen himself i one of the thickets already referred to, when a body of seve ral hundred men, with a multitude of led horses and car swept by.

Harry Beckwith was at this moment upwards of ten lon miles from the nearest British post. The troops which had ju passed him, were clearly about to spread themselves ove the entire face of the district, through which, in the even of his endeavouring to return, it would be necessary to trave whilst an occasional roll of drums and sounding of trumpe in different directions closer at hand, showed that it wa but a detachment from a corps which occupied every outl from the valley.

Thus situated, the young man was at no loss to discove first, that his chances of escape were extremely limited, an secondly, that there remained for him no other course pursue, except to lie still in his hiding-place, and wait th result. But this hope, slender as it was, was speedily take away from him. One of the baggage animals happening break loose from its leader, at the moment when the rear the column was skirting the wood, plunged directly into th *thicket, and, as* bad luck would have it, made for the ve *spot where the* young Englishman lay ensconced. It

[illegible]llowed, as a matter of course, by half a dozen of the guard, who were not slow in starting other game, besides that of which they came in pursuit; and Harry, driven from his lair, found that now, at length, that speed of foot of which he had so frequently boasted, must be put to the test.

Beckwith ran with all speed of which he was master, making at once for the brow of the hill; and he gained it, though not till the whistling of several bullets past his ear warned him that his course was traced; when, plunging into a sort of open wood, which skirted its opposite side, he turned short round, and took a direction immediately up the valley.

To that measure, adopted without thought and at random, his preservation was entirely owing. There was a ravine before him, dark with brambles and stunted filbert-trees, of the depth or extent of which it was impossible to form any judgment; and without a moment's hesitation he leaped into it. Though the leap was both a desperate and a fearful one, it was productive of no mischievous consequences. His fall, broken by the interposing branches, though many feet in height, was a soft one, and he rolled unhurt to the bottom of the gorge, where a complete screen of foliage covered him. There he lay for some minutes, listening with painful anxiety to the shouts and execrations of his pursuers, who, ignorant of the step which he had taken, still swept onwards over the hill, till their voices became gradually more and more indistinct, and at last ceased entirely to be heard.

Having remained perfectly still for several minutes, Beckwith ventured at last to rise, and look round upon the friendly cleft to which he was indebted for his safety. It was a wild and rugged cut, the edges of which presented an appearance as if the hill had been torn asunder at no very remote period by the violence of an earthquake. Bushes and low shrubs were indeed numerous, especially towards the summit, which threw their branches here and there from one side of the ravine to the other, and caused the fissure itself to rest in deep gloom; but these grew out of *some rocky protuberances*, or perpendicular banks of red *sand, which seemed as if* they would at once reunite, were

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it possible to bring them by any application of force together. From the summit to the base, this singular ravine might measure perhaps from sixty to eighty feet; nor was it without a shudder that Beckwith contemplated the escape which he had made from utter destruction in his daring plunge. He had however the satisfaction to know he had gained his present lurking-place unnoticed, and the happy position of the place itself afforded the best ground of hope that no one would dream of exploring it in search of him.

Thus reassured, he began once again to breathe with something like freedom; whilst at the same time he resolved to rest quietly where he was till sufficient time should be granted for the enemy to become weary of a quest, to guide them in which no clue was afforded.

He had just made up his mind to act upon this plan, when all his dreams of fancied security were again dissolved. There came a sound of voices upon his ear, whence proceeding he scarcely knew how to surmise; but fear, which is always suspicious, suggested that his covert must be less inaccessible than he had believed it to be. He listened with breathless attention; laid his ear to the ground that he might catch the sound more distinctly; and then, convinced that the speakers were not above, but on a level with himself, he once more took to his heels.

Dashing along the ravine, he soon arrived at its extremity, and the open and cultivated country was again before him. Beckwith was now desperate. He saw, or fancied that he saw, horsemen riding about in every direction; each movement of the leaves behind him told a tale of pursuers close at hand; whilst his further flight, if it were prosecuted at all, must be made across a plain, where the most minute object could from any of the neighbouring heights be observed. Like other men in desperate circumstances, he determined to cast all upon the hazard of a die. There was a mansion immediately under the hill, the architecture and general style of which denoted it to be the residence of a gentleman; Beckwith resolved at once to make for it, and throw himself upon the generosity of its owner.

He did so. The house was the abode of Mr. Morgan, a

man of some consequence before the troubles began, and even now respected, as far as a neutral can be, by the leading men on both sides of the question; and Harry Beckwith found that whatever his political sentiments might be, he was at all events a person of honour and right feeling.

Mr. Morgan received his unwelcome guest, if not with open arms, still kindly. He readily furnished the asylum which was sought, and concealing him in a hayloft, kept him there till the foraging party had withdrawn. Nor was the risk run in so doing slight. The American troops, having already searched his house, did not indeed re-examine it with the minuteness which characterised their first inquiries; but during the whole of that day they hovered round it, as if they anticipated that their quarry would yet appear in its vicinity.

Now, as the arrival of the stranger could not be concealed from any inmate in the house, Mr. Morgan, no less than Beckwith, remained all that while at the mercy of his very slaves, the treachery of one of whom must have brought the necks both of the fugitive and his preserver into jeopardy. Happily, however, there were as yet no traitors among them. After remaining some hours in no very enviable state of mind, Harry was made happy by the announcement that the coast was clear, and that it rested with himself either to make his way back at once to the British lines, or to partake the hospitality of his preserver during the night.

There were many reasons which induced Beckwith not to decline the invitation thus implied. In the first place, having deviated widely from any track with which he was familiar, there was little chance of his finding his way across the Neutral Ground in the dark; whilst a powerful feeling of bodily fatigue gave notice that he was in no condition for commencing a long and toilsome journey. In the next place, his nerves were too much shaken to leave him as much master of himself as a man would desire to be, who sees before him the prospect of a hazardous enterprise. He therefore thankfully closed with Mr. Morgan's alternative of continuing his guest during the night; and, as such, he was led by his kind host to the parlour.

Mr. Morgan's family consisted, besides himself, of tw children, a son and a daughter. The boy was a graceful intelligent, and apparently an amiable youth, whose ag could not exceed fifteen or sixteen years. The girl was t two years his senior, and a more perfect specimen of femi nine loveliness, it were no easy matter to point out; whils a manner frank, yet modest, and though playful, totall devoid of levity, insured a continuance of that admiratio which even a passing glance never failed to excite.

Nor were her external beauties, either of form or manner at variance with the feelings of her heart. There neve breathed a girl of gentler disposition, or more honourabl sentiments, than Cecily Morgan: warm-hearted, generous affectionate, and confiding, the last being whose happines she appeared to consult, was herself; indeed, her happi ness may be said to have arisen entirely from a contem plation of the happiness of those among whom she dwel It is scarcely necessary to add after this, that Cecily was a object of positive adoration to her father, who watched a her movements, and lived upon her smiles, more like a impassioned lover than a parent.

It would have been something extraordinary had Harr Beckwith, a professed admirer of female beauty, failed t be powerfully struck with the extreme loveliness of this un sophisticated girl. Nor is it to be wondered at, if the ope and manly countenance of Beckwith, his graceful figure an gentlemanlike manners, should have produced a somewha similar impression on Cecily.

During some years past Mr. Morgan had kept up little c no intercourse with the busy world; and hence the onl male society to which his daughter had been accustome since her arrival at the period of opening womanhood, wa almost exclusively confined to the members of her ow family. To her, therefore, the conversation of a sprightl stranger presented more than ordinary attractions from it novelty; whilst the peculiarity of the circumstances whic had introduced them to one another, seemed to place then at once, and without the slightest breach of decorum, on footing of perfect intimacy.

What remains to be told of the events which occurre

previous to the opening of my story, may be related in few words. The little party broke up, not however till a late hour, mutually delighted with one another; and the Englishman departed next day, carrying with him the best wishes of his generous entertainers.

He reached the lines in safety, his absence from which for so long a period had created no little alarm; and he resumed his career of blended duty and amusement, as if no adventure more memorable than usual had occurred.

But Beckwith's thoughts often wandered back to the sylph-like creature with whom he had so strangely been brought into acquaintance. He saw her soft blue eyes beaming upon him in his dreams by night, and in his busiest thoughts by day; the rich clear tones of her musical voice vibrated in his ears at all moments of his sleeping and waking existence, till the vision became, as the poet expresses it, "a portion of himself."

The consequences which followed, were exactly such as may be anticipated. First came a species of internal discussion as to the possibility of seeing her again; this was shortly succeeded by a conclusion, that the attempt might at least be hazarded; and the lapse of a single week found him once more equipped as a sportsman, but bent upon an object very different from the destruction of game.

On that occasion, he was accompanied by his cousin Oliver, to whom he had communicated no more than the general outlines of his late adventure; and who was easily persuaded to believe that his generous-hearted relative thrust his life again into danger for the purpose of proving that he was not ungrateful to the man who had once preserved it.

The enterprise was not attended by any perilous, or even troublesome consequences. The young men made their way to Belmont, the name of Mr. Morgan's plantation, without the smallest interruption from the enemy. They were received with the warmth of an old-established friendship; and treated with the open hospitality, for the exercise of which the American gentry were then remarkable; and they returned to their quarters equally delighted with

the excursion, and equally disposed to repeat it on the first convenient opportunity.

From that period up to the date of the misunderstanding just described, this romantic intimacy, on the part at least of the younger of the cousins, continued, in spite of an increasing jealousy displayed by the Republican leaders, and the multiplied risks into which it led the adventurer. His escapes were both numerous and narrow; yet he did escape, without, as was believed, bringing the slightest suspicion upon his friends; nor did the fate of André itself operate to deter him from following a course, the true motive to which could no longer be concealed.

On more than one occasion that motive had been alluded to by Oliver, in terms which proved the reverse of agreeable to the person warned; but it was not till the morning with which my tale commences, that the relatives came to any open or decided explanation on the subject.

CHAPTER III.

DOUBTLESS, it was not without a pang of keen and heartfelt regret, that Oliver Beckwith saw himself under the necessity of breaking with a man in whose society he had hitherto experienced the liveliest satisfaction; but on the other hand, the ground of his quarrel with him was of such a nature as his judgment could not fail to approve, and when judgment and mere feeling stood opposed the one to the other, there was no scope for hesitation as to which it behoved him to obey. This consideration served exceedingly well to keep under his rebellious yearnings, whilst yet the sound of his cousin's retiring footsteps were heard; but these no sooner died away in the distance, than other thoughts began to arise, which he found it easier to call into view than to dismiss again. Was not Harry's capricious temper well known to him? Had not the

experience of a lifetime served to convince him, that though his relative might be led into any course of acting, by no violence physical or moral would he submit to be driven; and hence, that whatever his designs might be, a very erroneous method, to call it by no harsher name, had been adopted for the purpose of diverting him from them.

The more Oliver considered these matters, the firmer became his conviction, that in every point of view he had himself acted with precipitation; till at last a powerful impulse prompted him to turn back in search of his cousin, that, if he did not own himself wholly in the wrong, he might at least explain away certain phrases which he now heartily repented that in his violence he had employed.

Accordingly, Oliver turned round to follow his relative, but not a trace of Harry was to be seen; he strained his eyes over a country remarkably open and level, yet he strained them for no purpose; till, believing that the opportunity was lost of doing the thing as he knew that it ought to be done, he determined, for the present at least, not to do it at all. He accordingly resumed once more his homeward course, and passing the outposts, stole away by the rear of the cantonments, like one who had committed a crime, to his own quarters within the lines.

I have hitherto spoken of Oliver Beckwith merely as a cautious and upright young man,—as a person not only incapable of perpetrating a dishonourable action, but too prudent to permit feeling to exert any influence over his actions. It is extremely probable that in thus expressing myself, I have conveyed to your minds some very erroneous impressions of my old acquaintance. Though certainly not the slave of impulse, like his cousin,—though undeniably prudent, correct, perhaps blamably calculating, Oliver Beckwith was nevertheless made up of the common ingredients which constitute human nature; and like other beings so formed, he was not insensible to the influence of passion, though usually competent to hold it in its right place—in other words, subservient to the dictates of reason. Like his more inflammable relative, he had not, from the first, been insensible to the many attractions which Cecily Morgan presented. He saw in her the perfect personification of all

that his fancy had ever depicted of the gentle and attractive in women; and if he loved her not with the violence which characterised the passion of his headstrong cousin, he at least entertained for her as much of ardent affection as it was in his nature to experience.

But Oliver was under no circumstances so far ingrossed by the workings of natural feeling, as to be blind to the consequences likely to arise out of their indulgence. In the present instance, for example, he applied to himself the very same arguments which he has been represented as applying to Harry; and he soon reasoned himself into the pursuasion that something more than prudence—that justice, as well to the girl as to himself, required that he should think of her no more. Nor let it be concealed, that in the formation of a resolution never to address her in the language of love, other and not less generous considerations had weight. He saw with the perspicacity which for the most part attaches to men so situated, that to Harry, equally as to himself, Cecily Morgan was an object of admiration. He soon discovered likewise, that in the society of Harry she appeared more happy, at all events more elated, than in his own; and this observation led at once to a conviction that on Harry she had already bestowed the richest of all gifts—her virgin heart.

Now Oliver Beckwith was one of those who could not understand how a man may find gratification in any thing which lacerates the heartstrings of those around him; and hence the bare suspicion that Cecily loved another, would have been of itself sufficient to hinder him from making to her a tender of his hand. Partly, therefore, because his sound judgment told him that he was in no situation to marry, partly because he believed that the girl's affections were already engaged, Oliver not only never addressed her otherwise than in the language of friendship, but struggled, and not wholly without success, to regard her as a friend merely. She became to him a sister, in whose welfare he took the liveliest and purest interest; and she either was, or he persuaded himself that she was, nothing more.

In spite, however, of these noble and manly resolutions, there were moments when the thought of her as the property

of another, came upon him with the agony of a diseased dream. Perhaps it was because he was not unaware of his cousin's sentiments, that Harry bore with so ill a grace the jokes which Oliver from time to time thought fit to pass upon him. Perhaps, too, a secret consciousness that all was not as it ought to have been in his own bosom, caused Oliver himself to infuse more of bitterness than he needed to have done into his remarks; and hence, in all probability, arose the irritation which ensued almost as often as the name of Cecily Morgan chanced to be pronounced between them.

Be this as it may on other occasions, nothing can be more certain than that, in the quarrel which had of late taken place, this consciousness on both sides proved particularly operative; whilst it is equally beyond a doubt, that in the minds of both, after they separated, it continued to exert its influence to an exceedingly painful degree. Even now Oliver found himself its slave. True, he had determined never to allow a thought of his cousin's better fortune to interfere with the friendship which had so long existed between them. Yet when he reflected on the assurance with which his favoured rival spoke of a treasure which he, doubtless, valued the more, from the conviction that by himself it was unattainable, his indignation knew no bounds, and jealousy, or something not far removed from it, took possession of his entire soul. Thus was he alternately the prey of contending feelings, all of them more turbulent and impetuous than he had hitherto been accustomed to experience; till his very frame began at last to feel the effect of the tumult within, and he became feverish, restless, and uneasy.

Oliver Beckwith was thus circumstanced, when the sound of his own name, pronounced in the voice of a brother officer, broke in upon his reveries; and as he happened at the moment to be sitting beside the window, he drew back the lattice, and looking out, desired to be informed why he had been made the subject of his friends' conversation. A shout of satisfaction from a group of young men who stood beneath answered to this inquiry.

"Thank God! Beckwith," exclaimed one, "that you are here. No doubt you were warned at the pickets how matters stood. But where is Harry?"

"For Heaven's sake," replied Oliver, "what is it you mean? I received no warning at the pickets,—I am here purely by accident; and if any thing be wrong, then is poor Harry sacrificed."

"Heaven forbid!" answered his comrades in a breath. "Surely Harry is with you."

They all ran as they spoke towards his door, and in a moment stood around him in the apartment.

"Did you not go abroad together?" exclaimed the individual who had first spoken.

"Yes," answered Oliver "we went abroad together; but my inclination to wander quitted me, God knows why, whereas Harry has gone on, and will not return before evening."

There was a silence of some moments' duration at the close of this speech; during which the young men looked at one another with an expression sufficiently indicative of the painful interest with which they had listened to it. At last, one of them, as if desirous of comforting both himself and those about him, remarked, that possibly things might not be as the spy had represented; and that, even if it were so, Harry Beckwith had escaped so many hazards, that no one ought to despair of him until his death or capture had been ascertained.

"Gentlemen! gentlemen!" exclaimed Oliver, "this is all a mystery to me, and surely you know me well enough to be aware, that, by preserving it, you only keep me on the rack. In the name of fortune, what do you mean? What spy has come in? what news has he brought? and to what fresh dangers has my thoughtless and imprudent relative exposed himself?"

"To be plain, then," replied one of the group, "a deserter has just arrived with the most important information that has yet been communicated concerning the enemy's movements. Washington, reinforced by ten thousand Frenchmen, has been for some days arranging a plan of general assault upon our lines; and this night, or to-morrow morning at the latest, the attack is expected to be made. When the deserter left Peekskill, a heavy column of infantry, supported by cavalry and artillery, was arriving, at

at head of which marched Washington himself; and hence, ground a doubt, the whole of the Neutral Ground is either occupied already, or will be occupied in force before dark. You see, therefore, that there is strong ground to congratulate yourself upon your opportune return, let the cause be what it may; whilst for poor Harry, active and brave though he be, our hopes are, and must be, very slender."

Oliver listened to this detail with the sensations of a man who has heard a story which, but for some solitary though vitally important omission, would be in every particular gratifying. There was nothing for which he, in common with the army at large, so ardently sighed, as that one party or the other would bring affairs to the issue of a battle; and hence the announcement that the event so much desired was really on the eve of its occurrence, could not fail to excite in him the liveliest satisfaction. But the pleasure thence arising was dashed by no ordinary sorrow, when he thought of the present situation and future prospects of his relative. That Harry would escape again as he had escaped before, even the most sanguine could not venture to anticipate. It was not to be believed, that the frequent visits which he had made to Belmont, should have passed entirely unnoticed at the American head-quarters, because it was not to be expected that a numerous body of slaves and dependents, such as that which surrounded Mr. Morgan, were to a man trustworthy. Now should the enemy really advance that day, taking Belmont, as they must take it, in their route; and should the owner of Belmont be an object of suspicion, or one of his domestics prove a traitor, the strictest search would of course be made for British stragglers; and any straggler found under circumstances so unfavourable, could hardly expect to be treated otherwise than as a spy. Oliver shuddered as these reflections arose into his mind. The fate of André, though long past, was not yet forgotten, more especially by those to whom that unfortunate officer had been known; and Oliver, who happened to be of the number, trembled as the idea forced itself upon his notice, that in all human probability the fate of his relative would be similar.

It was well for the young man's feelings at this dis-

tressing juncture, that a sudden rolling of drums and sounding of bugles called off his attention to other and more urgent business. As there was no mistaking the nature of these sounds, the little coterie which had hitherto kept together, broke up in a moment; and Oliver was left alone to exchange his shooting-dress for the uniform of his regiment.

In five minutes his toilet was completed, his sabre buckled to his side, and his pistols in his belt; and then, with a hurried step and flashing eye, he sallied forth to place himself at the head of his company.

Though no tyro in military affairs, Oliver Beckwith imagined that he had never beheld a more striking military spectacle than now met him. Soldiers of all arms, cavalry, infantry, artillery, and riflemen, were hurrying to their several alarm posts; mounted officers were riding backwards and forwards; some coming from the rear to the front, others hastening from the front to the rear; thousands of voices spoke, neither loudly nor tumultuously, but in suppressed tones and brief exclamations; whilst every countenance appeared to be lighted up with the fire of expectation.

This state of things was not, however, of long continuance. As each individual knew well the particular spot to which, in case of alarm, it behoved him to repair, all were in their places within the space of a few moments; and then the most profound silence, and the strictest order, reigned from one extremity of the lines to the other.

At last, however, a feeling of disappointment, or to speak more accurately, symptoms of men's nerves becoming gradually unstrung, began to exhibit themselves in all directions. Questions were put as to the necessity of acting as they had done; something like murmuring was heard, that the enemy did not come on; and there was a wavering in the ranks which showed that the soldiers were weary of continuing on the alert against a danger which approached not.

The officer in command was not slow to detect this; nor did he treat it otherwise than as became him. The word was passed from battalion to battalion to pile arms; and

men having been strictly cautioned not to straggle, were permitted to fall out.

Things were in this state, and the low position of the sun in the sky gave warning that day was drawing rapidly to a close, when a sentinel, who kept watch in the battery that faced the Hudson, called aloud that something moved upon the river. Oliver, who happened to be lying down not far from the man's post, instantly sprang to his feet, and gazing in the direction towards which the soldier pointed, beheld plainly enough that the alarm was not a false one. At as great a distance up the stream as the eye could very well reach, the Hudson appeared to be covered with boats; but in what direction moving, or whether moving at all, it was impossible to say. The circumstance was, however, too important to be permitted to pass unheeded. Though no immediate change in the order issued took place, all ranks became in consequence once more on the *qui vive*; nor did many minutes elapse ere another event occurred, not less calculated than this to rekindle their slumbering excitement.

Numerous groups both of men and officers were assembled in the battery, and numerous glasses were turned upon the objects of curiosity, when a solitary musket-shot in the direction of thepickets was heard. For an instant the men seemed to take the alarm; they faced about as soon as the report caught their ears, and exhibited a disposition to resume their ranks; but as the shot was not followed by others, they gradually ceased to regard it, and once more became careless and sluggish.

An interval of perhaps a quarter of an hour now occurred, during which the sun sank with the abruptness which in the western hemisphere marks its departure; and twilight came on, not, as in this country, slowly and beautifully, but darkly and at once. Had nothing further taken place, the approach of night, situated as the garrison of Kingsbridge was, would have caused of itself the troops to draw closer to their arms; but the last glimmer of day had not yet departed, ere the expectation of an immediate attack was renewed. First one, then two muskets, then a long rattle as if an entire section had fired, broke in upon the

silence; these were speedily followed by the boom of a non; and in the next instant the whole line of pi which covered the front of the position, was engaged.

Now, then, all was hurry and excitation. There cry from right to left of "Stand to your arms!" bugles sounded, the drums beat, the troopers mounted horses, and the artillerymen stood to their guns; whilst cers in command of corps rode furiously along the giving directions for the battalions to form.

All this was done in less time than I have taken in scribing it. The corps were again under arms, the rifl were again spread along the parapet, all in the space few seconds; and the word, 'Silence!' uttered in the well-k tones of their leaders, was alone heard through the B ranks. That command, at all times important, but dc so in circumstances like these, was obeyed even to the letter; and every individual, whilst he held his very br through intensity of expectation, became absorbed in templating the progress of the contest which went o front.

The night was now as dark as pitch; for the moon not yet risen, and a collection of heavy clouds co suddenly up from the north-east, at once obscured the s and gave warning of a storm. Nothing, therefore, c be seen of the combatants except the flashing of their kets, which, as the people engaged, were spread over a siderable space of ground, produced a remarkably bril and interesting effect. The whole extent of what appe to be the horizon, was thus marked by a line of fire,— continuous and regular, but broken and interrupted, that which a flight of fire-flies produces in a tropical clir or like the sparks from a smith's anvil when he is beati bar of hot iron.

Then, again, the rattle was not in volleys, as when compact line stands opposed to another, but scattering unequal, sufficiently indicating that the force on both s consisted of skirmishers merely, whatever might be nature of the support on which they leaned. Nor d fail to excite the surprise of all who watched the issue, by neither party was any decided advantage gained;

s on the one hand maintaining their ground bravely,
the assailants on the other were not repulsed. The
ɜr of wounded, too, who came in from time to time,
arcely adequate to what might have been expected
a fire so lengthened; whilst the rumours which they
ıted were all vague and indefinite, leading to no ra-
conclusion as to the ultimate intentions of the enemy.
was natural that reports of this nature should perplex
icer in command not a little; and he determined to
his doubts by sending out a strong reconnoitring

For this purpose he gave directions that two com-
from the regiment on the left should push forward to
pport of the pickets; and Oliver Beckwith happening
the first of his rank for command, the task of leading
on devolved upon him.

his instructions particularly directed him to ascertain,
ssible, upon what the enemy's light troops leaned,
determined not to throw his own people into extended
but, pressing forward in column, to scour the Philips-
road, till he should fall upon the head of the support
was supposed to rest there. That he might effect
ikewise, with as little annoyance as possible, he caused
ɜn to advance in a tumultuous and disorderly manner,
ıg their cartouch-boxes, stepping heavily on the ground,
reating as much noise as if a whole brigade were in
n.

ıether the stratagem produced its desired effect, or
ıer the enemy, having already amused themselves to
heart's content, were prepared to withdraw, I cannot
but before Beckwith came up with the line of pickets,
ring had ceased. The enemy had fallen back as sud-
as they came on, leaving no parties behind to cover
; and though Oliver pushed forward at a brisk pace,
ıg flankers out in every direction, he failed to overtake

Satisfied from this, that the late attack had been a
ɔne, he returned at once to the line of outposts; where,
sending back a subaltern with a full report to head-
ɜrs, he prepared, in obedience to his orders, to pass the

it was especially required of Oliver and his party, not

so much to reinforce, as to support the pickets, he took po in a ruined house, about half way between them and th works, and at nearly equal distances from the river on th one hand, and the Sound on the other. From this poin patrols were continually sent out, which, pushing from ex tremity to extremity, ascertained that all was safe between and that no man was inattentive to the vitally important trust which his situation imposed on him.

For a time, these excursions were productive of no remarkable results; and the night being mild though lowering, they went off without murmurs on the part of such as performed them; but as the heavy clouds drew more and more into a mass, other prospects were presented, and no great while elapsed ere they were realized. The storm which had so long been gathering, burst, and with a violence of which the mere European traveller can form no conception. The rain came down, not in heavy drops, but in sheets; the wind rising suddenly to a gale, caused the Sound to lash its shores with the noise of thunder; whilst the thunder itself muttered first angrily at a distance, and then broke in tremendous peals overhead. Yet the duty of patrolling could not, even for such a storm, be intermitted; indeed, the necessity for vigilance only increased, as the tempest increased in fury: and parties were lighted on their road by incessant and vivid flashes of lightning.

It was now that Oliver, the more to encourage his men took a doubly prominent part in the hardships and privations of the night. Scarcely a patrol sallied forth, of which he failed to put himself at the head; and his example sufficed to stir up not merely the admiration, but the emulation of his followers.

He had just returned from one of these excursions drenched, fatigued, and uncomfortable; and having thrown himself down before his watch-fire, was preparing to snatch a few moments of broken sleep, when a sergeant suddenly entered the room to announce that a prisoner had just been made, who knew his name and regiment, and desired particularly to see him.

Though there was nothing very remarkable in this, considering the situation which Oliver filled at the moment, still

the young mans heart fluttered strangely, as he commanded the prisoner to be introduced; and he rose from the ground to receive him, not without a fearful misgiving for which he found it impossible at that moment to account. The prisoner came. Oliver examined him closely; but garments soiled and muddy, and a cap drawn closely over the upper part of his face, constituted altogether such a disguise as he found it impossible to penetrate.

"You desired to see me," said Oliver after a pause; "speak out,—what is the nature of your communication?"

"I desired to see you alone," replied the stranger in a voice which, though evidently feigned, Beckwith was satisfied that he had heard before: "I cannot speak out what I have to say before witnesses."

"Sergeant, you may withdraw," exclaimed Oliver; "and now, friend," continued he, as soon as the door closed, "what am I to learn?"

"That which will give you no pleasure!" replied the stranger, at the same time lifting his cap, and exhibiting the features of young Morgan. "Your cousin is a prisoner; my father is taken; Cecily is liable to insult the bitterest and the greatest; all is lost if you do not immediately hasten to their assistance. I saw the miscreants bind the hands of both: I heard them declare that both should die the death of traitors to-morrow. Oh! Captain Beckwith, if you possess any love for your relative, any compassion for my unhappy father, or still more, any esteem for me or my miserable sister, do not delay a moment! The force which occupies Belmont is small; there is no support near; and I can lead you by a way which will bring you at once upon them, if you will but follow. For the love of Heaven, do not refuse my petition!"

The young man fell upon his knees as he spoke, and seizing the hand of Oliver, moistened it with his tears. What the latter felt at such a moment, I leave you to guess, whilst I proceed to describe the series of events which brought about the calamity to the detail of which he had just listened.

CHAPTER IV.

My story must now return to the point where it parted from Harry Beckwith. It has been stated that he was not over-fastidious in his dealings with the fair sex. Handsome, agreeable, well-informed, and polished, he possessed, and he was quite aware that he possessed, no slight weight in female society; and it is, I am afraid, too true, that he was not always very scrupulous to what purposes he turned it.

Yet Harry Beckwith was not an absolutely heartless libertine. More than once he had resisted the inclination to evil, when he saw, or fancied, that the mischiefs likely to arise would outweigh the gratification both to himself and others; and hence it is not to be supposed that he could deliberately and coolly determine upon the ruin of an innocent and confiding girl like Cecily Morgan. With all his faults, and they were both numerous and heavy, Harry was not deficient in gratitude; and he could not fail to perceive, that if he ever owed a debt of the kind to any human being, he owed it to Mr. Morgan. Nevertheless, Harry was not wanting in prudence. It required no monitor like his cousin to remind him that the pay of a subaltern, slenderly assisted by such an allowance as a younger son could grant to his younger son, would not suffice to support a wife and family as he should desire his to be supported; and hence the idea of marriage had never been entertained by him except as something which it behoved him at all hazards to avoid. If, therefore, he had not resolved to seduce the maiden, to his whom heart assured him that he was attached, as little had he made up his mind to address her in the language of honourable love; and hence, perhaps, not less than on account of the lurking suspicion which he entertained that Cecily was to Oliver an object of more than common interest, arose that excessive irritability to which he gave way, as often as his sentiments and wishes touching the girl became the subject of their conversation.

Whilst such thoughts as these passed rapidly, but painfully, through his mind, and whilst he writhed under reproaches which cut the more deeply as he felt them to be just, the space which separated him from the object of his fondest wishes was rapidly diminishing; and a thousand well-known landmarks were passed carelessly by.

At length he had by this time traversed the long and interesting sweep of road which separates Kingsbridge from the entrance of the valley, at the upper extremity of which the house of Belmont stands. Instinctively, he took a direction to the right; and moody, absent, and unobserving, began to ascend.

He was pressing on, with eyes riveted to the ground, or, if lifted at all, lifted in utter unconsciousness, when a sound, which to him was ever sweeter than the sweetest music, suddenly caught his ear.

"Harry, dear Harry!" exclaimed a voice, the tones of which were not to be mistaken, "why is it that you will not look up?"

Beckwith started like one suddenly awakened from sleep. He did look up,—and upon the brow of a little eminence close by, he beheld the being on whom his eye never rested except in a species of idolatry. She waved her hand to him, partly, as it seemed, in sign of recognition, partly in affected anger. In an instant all his cares and troubles were forgotten. What to him were grievances past, or prospects gloomy or sad for the future? The present overwhelmed them all. In it, and for it, he lived; and all but itself became things over which the waters of oblivion had swept. A brief moment served to carry him to her side, and in the next she was folded to his bosom.

Immediately their first greetings were past, and Cecily's joy at the meeting permitted her to examine the countenance of her lover, she observed there traces of feelings too deeply engraved even for her presence at once to dispel. Her gaiety immediately forsook her, and she became seriously alarmed.

"For heaven's sake, Harry," exclaimed she, disengaging herself from his embrace as she spoke, "what has befallen you? Why is it that you look so wild? Are you ill,

dearest? or has some calamity or misfortune overtak you? or—oh, heaven! my prophetic heart tells me that must be so—is your regiment ordered elsewhere, and a we doomed to part? Speak, speak, Harry! tell me t worst at once."

"Nay, dearest Cecily," replied he, "moderate yo fears; not one of all the evils you have enumerated h occurred. Yet I am unhappy, Cecily; and even you, gre as is your influence over me, will not, I fear, be al to make me otherwise."

"Unhappy, Harry!" cried she, in a tone which parto in part of gaiety, in part of reproach,—"unhappy, a not to communicate the cause to me! Is this fair? Is th treatment such as I merit at your hands? Am I k capable of bearing your sorrows than of partaking in yo joys? Or do you hesitate to intrust me with any secr who have kept no secret from you? Nay, Harry, y will not behave thus to a silly girl who has, perhaps t frankly, told you that she lives but for you, and wou gladly, gladly die to secure your welfare."

"Beautiful and artless creature," cried he, "believe r there is no matter worthy to be repeated, which I ever ha kept, or ever will keep concealed from you. At present am silent, simply because I scarcely know what cause assign for my depression of spirits. It is true that Oliv and I have had some words; we parted in anger, and th too about you; but we have often done so before, a without doubt we shall soon become reconciled again."

"About me, said you?" replied she. "Then your cou is opposed to our union; and not your cousin only, but your relatives in England. Oh, Harry, I have long su pected as much. I have all along feared that those gre and titled connexions of yours would not receive as a me ber of their family, a poor untaught child of the wilderne like myself. If it be so, Harry, do not hesitate to cast off. My heart will break, it is true, to lose you; but would break more speedily and more painfully were I to the cause to you of one moment's distress."

Cecily spoke not without emotion, yet without sheddi tears. She turned her bright blue eyes full upon t

countenance of her lover, who was gazing at her with an expression of admiration and respect, such as presented no exact picture of his feelings. Her glance, though timid and bashful as it always was, told no tale of wavering or indecision. But it is not in woman's nature to resist for any length of time the inroads of violent sorrow; and her calmness gradually but surely faded away. Then the tears came, not in floods, but slowly and one by one, gathering in her large blue eyes like raindrops, and rolling over the cheek without so much as a pressure of the lids.

Harry Beckwith was deeply and sincerely affected. Whatever his designs might have previously been, all his thoughts became on the instant purified and hallowed. Once more he pressed her to his heart, and assuring her, that in giving admission to such ideas, she made needless shipwreck of her own happiness, he proceeded, as well as he could, to give a general outline of his late conference with his cousin; representing their difference, however, as having arisen entirely from an attempt, on the part of Oliver, to dissuade him from continuing his visits to Belmont; and he more than insinuated that the attempt was made under the expectation that, were he removed, Oliver might himself find favour in Cecily's eyes.

"But you see, Cecily," continued he in a gayer tone, "that, however tender my regard for him, I am not quite so disinterested as to resign in his favour my claims upon you; therefore I refused to be guided by his sage but selfish counsels, and so we parted angrily."

Cecily was silent for a few moments, during which her expressive countenance exhibited signs of some strong and painful feeling at work within; but the cloud gradually departed from her brow, and she answered calmly:

"You surprise me by your communication, Harry. Oliver's manner has ever been to me kind and attentive; but it has been the kindness of friendship merely, not of love. We have conversed familiarly together about you, likewise; and on no occasion has he spoken of you otherwise than in terms of the warmest commendation. Surely you mistake his object; he cannot seriously mean to become

the suitor of one, whom he knows to be entirely and absolutely devoted to his friend."

Harry blushed as this severe but unintentional rebuke escaped her; and he was not sufficiently an adept in the art of deceiving, to conceal his blushes. He answered hurriedly and confusedly, that possibly he might have misunderstood his cousin; but that, if he did, the mistake arose entirely from the depth of his affection, which could not endure that any rival should presume to interfere with its intentions. He then hastily changed the subject, and, putting her arm through his, a few moments' walk brought them to their point of destination, where the visiter was cordially welcomed by Mr. Morgan and his son; and Harry Beckwith soon found himself once more seated in a snug parlour, beside the hospitable board of his preserver.

The habitation of which he was now an inmate, like the greater proportion of American villas of those days, was constructed entirely of wood, and in the cottage style, only one story, exclusive of attics, from the ground. It was a long pile, with white painted walls, green doors, a veranda in front, and a thatched roof; and the windows, in strict keeping with the general character of the building, were all of them leaded lattices. The grounds immediately about it had at one period been laid out with a strict attention to the taste of the times; and even now the parterres in which flowers had been reared, and the sloping banks and terraces, remained; but such was the unsettled state of the country, and so insecure the tenure by which property was held, that no man dreamed, as long as the war raged at his door, of paying the slightest attention to matters not of the first importance. Gardens, pleasure-grounds, lawns, and parks were accordingly permitted, throughout the whole compass of the Neutral Ground, to run to waste; and even the fields, so harassing were the inroads of the foragers from both camps, were in many districts left untilled.

This, together with the dilapidation of fences, the destruction of barns, sheds, and, in some places, of dwellings themselves, gave to the district an air of extreme desolation. But

within doors the case was different. There every thing bespoke the residence of a man accustomed in early life to the best society, and endowed with a taste for those pursuits which a polished mind can alone enjoy.

The truth is, that Mr. Morgan was not only what is usually called, a man of substance, but a gentleman by birth, circumstances, and taste. The only son of a rich merchant, he had enjoyed every advantage which an English education could bestow; and having, like most young Americans of his rank, made the tour of the European continent, he had borne a commission in his Majesty's service. Though it was not his fortune to see any real service before an enemy, still the society to which his military rank proved a passport, was not without its effect in polishing his manners and enlarging his ideas, at the same time that the habits of a military life gave tone to a character naturally inclined to timidity.

But Mr. Morgan continued in the army no longer than during the lifetime of his father, at whose decease he settled at New York. Here he formed an attachment to a very amiable woman, with whom in due time ne became united; and here, till the commencement of the troubles under which his country now groaned, he dwelt—for a while in affluence and domestic comfort; afterwards, as men usually dwell, whose brightest hopes in life are blighted.

Mr. Morgan was one of that numerous class of Americans, who from the first, determined to take no active part in the struggle between Great Britain and her Colonies. In principle, perhaps, he deserved to be ranked rather as a whig than as a tory; but, having once borne the King's commission, and having received great personal kindness from several of the King's ministers, he considered himself as bound in honour not to take up arms against his old master.

In accordance with this feeling, the declaration of adherance to the national cause on the part of the leading men in the city, was to him a signal of removal; and, as he had resigned long ago, on account of domestic circumstances, an office which he held under the King's government, he now withdrew, with his children and domestics, to Belmont, where he had *remained* ever since, steadily persevering in

that strict neutrality which, from certain peculiarities in his temperament, and a knowledge of the causes which produced it, he was permitted to pursue without molestation.

I have said that Mr. Morgan, soon after his return to New York, formed an alliance with an exceedingly beautiful and interesting woman. To his wife he was attached in a degree not frequently witnessed, nor even dreamed of, except in the world of romance. He lived for her, and for her only; she was the object of his almost idolatrous adoration; even the daughter whom she presented him within a year after their marriage, was to him as nothing, so completely were his thoughts ingrossed by devotion for his wife.

During three years he enjoyed the society of that amiable woman, but at the end of that period a calamity befel, which struck at once at the root of all his happiness. His wife died in bringing into the world a son, and Mr. Morgan became from that hour in all respects an altered man.

For some time after the decease of his wife, Mr. Morgan laboured under a decided aberration of intellect. He was not, indeed, at any moment violent, nor dangerous to himself or others; but he became totally incapable of all exertion, and quite inadequate to the transaction of the most ordinary business. From society, of which he had formerly been one of the brightest ornaments, he entirely withdrew; he gave up all occupation, resigning his office under government, and causing his private concerns to be disposed of at a serious loss; then guarding himself from the approach even of his most intimate friends, he existed altogether on the memory of a happiness which had been a great deal too perfect to last.

But the keenest sorrow will yield to time; and Mr. Morgan, after indulging for a space in this mode of existence, began gradually to attain to a more healthy tone of mind. It was now that his children became indeed to him sources of consolation the holiest and most pure; and in bestowing upon them his undivided care and attention, he found the void occasioned in his heart partially filled up. With his former friends and neighbours, however, he never resumed his intimacy. He lived the life of a recluse for several years in the heart of one of the

and most hospitable towns in America, an object of commiseration and involuntary respect to all classes ıhabitants.

hardly necessary to add, that to their knowledge of vate sufferings, Mr. Morgan was indebted for the ss with which both whigs and tories connived at ıption of a neutral principle; and that he was per- to remain, as he had done during the first six years, sted, except by an occasional visit from marauders ıont.

ıis retired spot Mr. Morgan devoted a large portion time to the education of his son and daughter. In ter, as she grew up to womanhood, he beheld not the personal loveliness, but the pliability, gentleness, reme affection which had distinguished her mother; became in consequence attached to her by a tie r than usually binds even a father to his child. was no accomplishment of which he was himself which he failed to bestow upon her.

e are, however, tints in the colouring of the female vhich no hand but that of a female can bestow; and e Cecily Morgan was unavoidably deficient. Clever s, intelligent, and amiable, and upright; she was nate likewise, warm-hearted, and sincere; yet was vanting a something which it would not be very describe; though of the something to which I every one who has had an opportunity of becoming ted with a girl brought up as Cecily had been, will be aware. It could not be said with any truth, ıe was forward; for a creature more essentially lived not; but she had no idea that there was a y for concealing her thoughts upon any subject, and he never failed, as often as circumstances invited, to er mind.

ı this cause, without doubt, a cause which owed its e entirely to the absence of a mother's superin- care, Cecily's heart soon became the property of dsome stranger; and her manner told the tale long ıe had addressed her in other terms than those of r *acquaintanceship*.

With respect to Davis, her brother, he was what most are likely to become who live much alone, and have from their boyhood free from the trammels of cu Like his sister, he was warm-hearted, open, and fr and having, like her, studied under an able tutor, he well versed in every kind of lore, except a knowled mankind. In person, too, he resembled Cecily gr only that his make was more robust, and his stature commanding; whilst in temperament he differed en from what his father had been at his age; inasmuch was bold, resolute, and fearless.

Such was the group of persons among whom H Beckwith now found himself seated, at a board amply s with every thing which a well-stocked farm and a differently-supplied cellar could furnish.

CHAPTER V.

THE welcome which Harry Beckwith received every member of this secluded family, was such as us awaits the solitary friend who is permitted from tin time to break in upon a privacy, to all but himself, st impenetrable.

It would have been contrary to nature, had not the easy feelings under which both Harry and Cecily labo melted before the sunshine of so many happy faces. young couple had not joined their friends many mi when their wonted gaiety and good-humour returned; seldom has a merrier or more lively party surround table, than that which sat down to the discussion o excellent fare which Mr. Morgan's housekeeper provid

Thus passed the meal, and thus too passed the p after the meal, during which the established rules of s permitted Cecily to be a partaker in the gentlemen's viviality. But the door had no sooner closed upo sylphlike figure, than Mr. Morgan, after requesting

to leave them, drew his chair closer to young Beckwith, and in a tone at once affectionate and serious thus addressed him:

"I presume, Mr. Beckwith, that you will not be surprised when I inform you, that for some time back I have observed between you and my daughter a degree of intimacy, respecting the object and design of which I consider myself bound by my duty as a parent to make some inquiry. It is not that I entertain the slightest suspicion of you, my young friend,—far less that I distrust Cecily; but I know the materials of which human nature is composed too well, not to be aware, that an acquaintance such as yours must either cease at once, or ripen into a tie more tender. Now, though Cecily is to me the very apple of mine eye; though, deprived of her society, there is nothing in this world capable of conferring upon me one moment's enjoyment, still my affection for her is at once too great and too disinterested to permit my harbouring a wish opposed to what shall appear to be her interests: and if you really love her, as I am disposed to believe that you do, in God's name take her. My fortune though not what it was, is still considerable; and if you are willing to become the protector of my child, it shall be freely shared with you. There is, however, one condition on which I must insist; it is that you abandon the British service, and settle where I may occasionally behold the single human being in whose presence I feel myself not utterly alone."

Young Beckwith was, to use the language of sailors, completely taken aback by this appeal. As Mr. Morgan had hitherto neither by word nor in manner evinced the smallest suspicion of the true cause which led him so frequently to Belmont, Beckwith had accustomed himself to believe that he might, without any danger of interruption, carry on his intrigue just as long as might suit his own views, and drop it entirely whenever those views were accomplished. The delusion thus dispelled as abruptly as unexpectedly, left him sadly at a loss how to act under circumstances on the occurrence of which he had never calculated. He was silent for some moments; and his embarrassment was such as could not escape the notice of his host.

"Surely," said the latter, in a tone partaking slightly sternness, "I have not fallen into error here; I have no trust, been making a tender of Cecily's hand to one knows not the value of the gift offered?"

"No, sir," answered Harry hurriedly; "of Miss M gan's excellent qualities and extreme beauty, I am and h long been, fully sensible; indeed, you do no more than jus to the nature of my sentiments, when you suppose tha have viewed her, from the first, with the fondest and warm partiality. But your offer, generous and noble as it has come upon me with so little previous warning, you will, I am sure, pardon me when I confess, that it utterly confounded me."

"Well, well," replied Mr. Morgan, smiling, "take t to recover from your confusion. Consider the matter d berately, and give me your answer, either now or on s future occasion, as may best suit you."

"Had I but my own wishes to consult," answered He eagerly, "Heaven knows that not a moment would required for deliberation on such a subject. But there others interested in this matter, to whose opinion I bound to pay some respect. My father lives, and tho neither his only nor his eldest son, he will of course ex to be consulted in an affair so important. Then, ag there is your annexed condition:—how can I with hon —how can I without absolute and eternal disgrace, ac to that at a juncture like the present?"

"I made no mention of any particular day or hour, Beckwith," replied his host drily; "nor am I so anxious to rid myself of the presence of Cecily, as to f her upon any man against his will. We had better cha the subject."

"Nay, nay, my dear sir!" exclaimed Harry, serio alarmed at the turn which matters seemed about to ta "if you imagine that my not closing instantly with proposal, and abandoning every thing—country, frie profession, and fame itself, for her sake, arises from feeling of indifference towards your daughter, you do wrong. Heaven is my witness——"

At this moment the door of the parlour burst open,

gro slave, with terror strongly depicted in his coun-
ice, rushed in. "Fly, massa, fly, hide!" exclaimed the
ied creature; "here come de Skinners afoot and a
back, right up de valley, and yonder be de Riglers on
sides all round de house. For God's sake hide
a English captain, or he hang like a dog."
r. Morgan and Harry sprang to the window, and there,
enough, a spectacle met them, which caused the blood
)th to stagnate. A squadron of some twenty or
/ irregular horsemen, followed by a company of ill-
ed militia, were advancing rapidly up the glen, the for-
being already within two hundred yards of the pad-
·gate. The hills on either hand were covered with
s, some resting idly on the summits, others in strag-
· detachments winding along their faces, whilst all
ared to observe with marked scrutiny the movements
.e party which directed their steps towards Belmont.
quired no further evidence to assure both Harry and
ost that the house was surrounded; escape, therefore,
ight was entirely cut off, should such a measure be
red. But as this was not the first occasion on which
ont was visited in a threatening manner, though the
n of those who threatened extended no further than to
t forage, Mr. Morgan was willing to believe that no
nal damage would accrue either to himself or his
. In this, however, he had been deceived, as the
rences of the next minute demonstrated.
r. Morgan had just time to express himself to this
, when his son and daughter, breathless with agitation,
d into the room. "We are betrayed!" exclaimed the
r fiercely. "You have been traced, Beckwith, and
are come to arrest you: all chance of flight is taken
; every approach to the house is watched; and an
r's guard is already at the door. What is to be done?"
Nothing!" replied Harry coolly; "there is nothing to
me, except to submit quietly to a misfortune which we
t avert. I had rather they had taken me, if I must
ken, in the field; but here, as there, I can be treated
as a prisoner of war."
No, no!" exclaimed Cecily, throwing herself frantick

into his arms, "they will not treat you as a prisoner of war. It is as a spy they seek you; if you fall into their hands, your death is certain."

"Impossible, Cecily!" replied Beckwith, though he was far from feeling the assurance which he wished to convey to her: "I am here upon the Neutral Ground; beyond our own pickets, it is true, but not within the circle of theirs; they cannot, without a gross violation of the laws of war, condemn me."

"And my father! my father too, his life is sacrificed!" shrieked the agonized girl.

At this moment, the voices of men, and the heavy tramp of feet were heard in the passage.

"We will make one effort to save you, yet," exclaimed Mr. Morgan, moving at the same time towards the head of the room. There was suspended there a large painting, a copy from one of the Cartoons, which reached to within a few feet of the floor. This Mr. Morgan thrust aside, and a small door was displayed, which being pushed back, gave access to a sort of recess or dark closet.

"There, Harry, take shelter there," exclaimed he; "and remember that whatever conversation you may chance to overhear, you must on no account show yourself. If you are found under this roof, both you and I shall suffer; should they not succeed in forcing you from your hiding-place, one of us certainly, perhaps both, may escape."

There was no time for expostulation or reply; for the young man had scarcely taken his station, and the picture was barely replaced as it had been before, when four troopers, headed by an officer, burst into the parlour.

"A good day to you, Mr. Morgan!" said the officer, a tall, robust, cross-made man, with huge black whiskers, and a particularly forbidding expression of countenance. "These are pleasant times for a man to enjoy the quiet of his own family: doubtless, you lead but a secluded life here, and have no objection occasionally to entertain an old acquaintance."

"It will give me much pleasure to entertain the gentleman who now addresses me," replied Mr. Morgan firmly, "though I cannot recollect that I ever had the honour

of seeing him before—or any other officer in the American service."

"And in King George's service too, I suppose," said the intruder. "You Neutrals are not very particular, as every body knows, whom you honour with your friendship. I am extremely anxious to become acquainted with one of them there red-coats: may I beg the favour of you to produce him?"

"I do not understand you, sir," replied Mr. Morgan. "There are no red-coats here, as far, at least, as I am aware."

"Oh, no doubt, no doubt. You are not aware that a young gentleman came this morning from the post of Kingsbridge, with a fowlingpiece on his shoulder and a couple of dogs;—whew, whew; there they go,—and very pretty setters they are, I assure you. They seem to expect their master hereabouts too; for, see, they are smelling under the very window!"

Mr. Morgan looked out, and beheld Harry's dogs running at large upon the lawn. The circumstance was abundantly mortifying; and the more so, as one of them carried round his neck a collar, on which the name, rank, and regiment of his master were engraved. Yet hoping that his case was not absolutely desperate, he determined still to deny strictly all knowledge of them and of their owner. He did so, but it was to no purpose.

"You know nothing about them!" said the officer, with imperturbable gravity. "Of course, they made their way into your stable by pure accident, and quite accidentally tied themselves to the manger. I dare say, now, their master's visit was just as accidental as theirs."

"Well, sir," said Mr. Morgan, conscious that further evasion would avail nothing, "what matters it though an English officer should have been here? You are aware, I presume, that this is Neutral Ground, and that we are liable to interruptions, not from our friends only, but from enemies."

"Very true," replied the trooper; "friends and enemies are equally entitled to traverse the Neutral Ground; but to whom am I to consider that you allude under that title?

and where is this Neutral Ground of which you speal You don't mean to call the British, enemies? because, y know, you have seen nothing of any British to-day;—a we, I presume, are hardly accounted friends."

"Sir!" said Mr. Morgan, firmly, "this is sheer triflin I confess to you that an English officer has been here t day. He ventured so far abroad in search of game, a made a demand upon me for hospitality, which I could r refuse; but where he is now you must discover for yo selves. The instant an alarm was given of your approa he fled, and I have not seen him since."

"Now this is what I call coming near to the mar replied the officer, pouring out a glass of wine, and drin ing it. "I guess we shall go on step by step till we rea the whole truth at last. Do you take me for so perfec simpleton," continued he, looking fiercely, "as to supp that I believe one word of that fine cock-and-bull stor Why man, a mouse could not have escaped us. We h been round your premises these two hours, and thoug saw with my own eyes the young gentleman enter, neit mine nor any body's besides saw him sally forth aga Poh, poh, I know that he is in the house somewhere; you had better at once produce him."

"If you know that he is in the house," replied Mr. M gan, "your shortest plan will be to search till you find hin

"No, by all that is damnable!" exclaimed the troop "I know a better and shorter method than that. Look here, friend. Your true character is known at last. Un a pretence of ill-health, or ill-humour, or a point of hon forsooth, or some such miserable subterfuge, you have b acting the traitor to your country, and receiving contin visits from British officers, whom you have sent back New York loaded with all the intelligence which you co procure. Your life, therefore, is forfeited, and if I choo I may hang you up, without further inquiry, on the nea tree on your own lawn. But this cursed spy we m catch; and I spare you, only that you may have the sha and mortification of surrendering him into my power. deliver him, or, by heaven, you shall swing for it on instant!"

"*You say rightly*, sir," replied Mr. Morgan, calm

"that my life is in your hands. You may do with it what you will, but you cannot compel me to act contrary to the dictates of honour and conscience."

"We shall see," said the trooper, fiercely. "Soldiers, seize that old scoundrel, and bind his hands behind his back; and hark ye, cause a large fire to be lighted on the green sward; we shall try whether a little roasting may not bring the traitor to his senses."

The soldiers advanced to obey these orders; but Cecily and Davis rushed in between, and the former on her knees, the latter with hands clasped violently together, besought them to desist. "Spare, spare my father!" they both exclaimed in a breath.

"You would not do as you threaten," cried Davis, turning to the officer: "the uniform which you wear is that of a soldier; you could not disgrace it by acting the part of a Skinner!"

"A Skinner, boy!" cried the ruffian, with a savage laugh. "Why, what the devil am I but a Skinner, and what are these but Skinners? Did you take us for Riglars? poor mercenary slaves, whose liberty is sold for a daily pittance? I know better than that; and now that you know it too, do you think that I won't keep my promise? Get the fire lighted one of you," continued he, turning to his followers, "and the rest do as I command."

"Wretch! then you shall do more than keep your promise," exclaimed the youth, grasping a knife that lay on the table, and springing towards the officer. But the latter was too much accustomed to such acts of desperation, not to be continually on his guard against them; he leaped aside, and with a blow of his fist stretched the stripling on the ground. The soldiers now closed in, and fatal consequences might have followed, had not the attention of the combatants been suddenly attracted by a violent shaking of the picture at the upper end of the room. No time was granted for the utterance of conjecture as to its cause, ere the picture itself was pushed aside, and Harry Beckwith, his eye flashing with fury, stood before them.

"Monsters! ruffians! assassins!" cried he, "what do you meditate? Would you murder an innocent man in

cold blood? Let that gentleman go, and make me your prisoner—I am the person whom you seek; but remember also that I am a British officer; and as such, that I insist upon being carried immediately before your General, who will deal with me as justice requires."

The effect of Beckwith's sudden appearance among them was, with all parties present, as if a thunderbolt had burst over their heads. Cecily screamed aloud; and before Harry, who sprang forward, could reach her, she fell senseless upon the carpet. Mr. Morgan could only exclaim, "Oh, Beckwith, you have ruined all!" whilst Davis, shaking himself free from the nerveless grasp of the Skinners, darted through the open door, and disappeared.

As to the American officer, though at first not less astonished than the rest, he very soon recovered his composure, and rubbing his hands one within the other, exclaimed, "Bravo! young gentleman; this is a pretty piece of work as ever one would wish to witness. I guessed our farce would end in a serious play; and so it has. Come along, my master,—you have saved your friend here from a little broiling; but hanged you shall both be, before another sun sets, or my name is not Jonathan Dobson. What-ho, there! sergeant of the guard, seize your prisoner."

His summons was answered by the advance of an additional party from the lawn, who, running forward, leaped through the open window into the apartment. They turned upon Beckwith, who was supporting the seeming lifeless form of Cecily in his arms, and without the smallest compunction for his evident sufferings, or the pitiable state of the girl, grasped him tightly by the arms. "Hands off, scoundrels!" exclaimed he; "I have told you that I do not mean to offer any resistance; but, if you attempt to drag me away from that lady in her present condition, by Him that made me, you shall find that you had better attack the lioness nursing her cubs!"

As he spoke, he shook the men aside like children; then, gently raising Cecily from the floor, he bore her to a couch, on which he laid her. "Now then, gentlemen," continued he, "only permit me to see this lady's senses restored, and I will follow you wherever you choose to lead."

But his endeavours to soften such miscreants as those who

ded him, availed nothing. Uttering dreadful oaths ain seized him, threw him upon his back, in spite lesperate resistance, and passing a cord round his ound his hands so tightly behind him, that the very eemed ready to burst from the fingers' ends. The treatment was bestowed upon Mr. Morgan; and nd not till then, their leader thought of paying on to Cecily. But his notice of her amounted to g more than a summons to such of the domestics as ithin call, and an order to convey her to her chamith strict injunctions that both she and they should t prisoners, till directions were given to the contrary. he mean while Davis, who had so promptly turned to t the general stupefaction occasioned by Beckwith's ance, was sorely put to it, how to elude the pursuit he apprehended would be made after him. To at- a passage through the cordon of troops which sur- d the house, would, he was well aware, be useless; here to conceal himself within doors from the scrutiny Skinner and his gang, he knew not. In this a he took refuge in the case of a huge eight-day which stood in the hall, where for a long while he ed undisturbed or rather undetected. But that was to him one of the most intensely and painfully ting that he had ever spent; for he became an ness to a scene more harrowing to his feelings than her which could have well passed before him.

CHAPTER VI.

ELY premising that (as you may have already con- d), it was through the information of a faithless slave Morgan's that the scene I have just described was t *about, I shall proceed* to state that Captain Jona- *bson, as the leader of* the Skinners was called, had no *cured his prisoners,* than he despatched a messenger

to inform General Heath of the event. The announcement was received with as much satisfaction as if the fate of empires depended upon it; and a court-martial was commanded instantly to assemble, for the purpose of awarding to the captives the destiny which they should appear to merit.

In ordinary cases the utmost caution is used in selecting the members of a tribunal upon whose fiat depends the life or death of a fellow-creature; and possibly the Americans were not on other occasions less fastidious than their neighbours;—but never was fitness for the office more undisguisedly disregarded than was done that day, in choosing the persons appointed to try Harry Beckwith and his host. The court consisted of two captains of irregular bands, Captain Jonathan Dobson being of the number; as many subalterns of militia; with a field-officer attached to the staff of General Heath, as president.

Of these, all, the staff-officer not excepted, were persons of mean birth, limited education, strong party feelings, and violent tempers. The two captains were indeed men of lawless and reckless habits, who carried arms not from any love of country or principle, real or imagined; but purely because of the licence which a state of warfare affords, for the indulgence of the worst passions which degrade human nature: in whose eyes murder and rapine were matters of mere business, and a man's life of no more value than the life of a dog.

Nor, to say the truth, were the militia lieutenants in many respects better qualified than they to act the part of judges. If less sanguinary than the Skinners, they were unquestionably more timorous, as well as far more deeply imbued with personal and political antipathies; and hence men in the situation in which Mr. Morgan and Harry Beckwith now found themselves, ran to the full as many risks from imbecility on the one hand, as from cruelty on the other.

The place chosen for the important drama about to be acted, was the hall, a large oblong room, in one corner of which stood the clock within the case of which Davis Morgan lay concealed. There was a sort of dais, or elevat

platform at the upper end, on which a table was placed, the judges taking their seats round it with great formality; and the prisoners, having their hands bound tightly behind them were led forward by three dragoons, armed with drawn sabres. More, perhaps, for the sake of effect, than that any additional precautions were necessary, a platoon of soldiers, with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets, were drawn up at the other extremity; whilst in a remote corner stood the slave, to whose treachery the present scene was owing, and who was now about to consummate his crime by appearing as an evidence against his master.

There was a silence of a few moments whilst these matters were adjusting, which enabled the prisoners to take an accurate survey of the countenances and air of the men before whom their defence was to be made. That survey was not very favourable to the enjoyment of hope: but had such a feeling been indulged, the opening of the proceedings would have sufficed to destroy it; for it became manifest at once, from the mode of interrogation adopted, that the fate of the prisoners was sealed.

"You are, I believe," said the president, addressing himself to Beckwith, "an officer in the service of the British tyrant?"

"I have the honour to bear a commission," replied Harry, "in the army of his Britannic Majesty, to whom the epithet which you have just used does not apply."

"Well," continued the president, with a sardonic smile, "we are not going to dispute about a word. Have the goodness to inform this court, how you came to be taken at so great a distance from your lines, and in the disguise which you now wear."

"By all means," replied Beckwith. "In the first place, my present costume is no disguise: it is an ordinary shooting-dress, as your own senses may assure you; whilst the reason which caused me to assume it, is the very same which has guided me thus far beyond our outposts. I came abroad on an excursion of pleasure, under the persuasion that your army was, *as it has long* been, in position in the Highlands."

"*I suppose, then,* you would have us believe," said the

president, "that your journey hither has been one of accident purely. Is this the first visit which you have paid to Belmont?"

"Certainly not," replied Beckwith; "I have visited Belmont frequently before, though always on the same errand."

"Doubtless!" replied the president. "May I ask under what circumstances your acquaintance with your friend Mr. Morgan began?"

"Under the very same which have attended its continuance,—accidental," replied Beckwith.

"You are not, then, indebted to Mr. Morgan for any thing beyond a few common civilities; you have never lain concealed under his roof, whilst American soldiers were in search of you?"

"I do not deny that I attempted to conceal myself this morning, as I presume any other man would have done in my circumstances."

"Good," said the president, looking round with an expression of malicious delight upon his brother members; "so far you speak candidly. Now be kind enough to state whether this is the first time you have so concealed yourself, and why you should have experienced so very strong a reluctance to be taken."

"No soldier, I presume," replied Beckwith, purposely eluding the first interrogatory, "feels otherwise than reluctant to become, under any circumstances, a prisoner of war; but the idea becomes doubly humiliating to him who sees himself liable to that fate through his own rashness."

"Then you had no fears for your neck?"

"For my neck!" exclaimed Harry with affected astonishment; "is it customary with the American troops to put their prisoners to death?"

"We always hang spies," observed the president, drily. Then turning to Mr. Morgan, he began to put certain leading questions to him.

"You are, I think, one of those respectable members of *society," said* he, "who choose to take no part in the struggle *between America* and her oppressors?"

"I have hitherto observed a strict neutrality," said Mr. Morgan, "for reasons, of which your chiefs are fully aware, and of which they have thought fit to approve."

"But this neutrality of yours does not hinder you from holding intercourse—familiar and confidential intercourse—with the agents of Sir Harry Clinton?"

"I have held no intercourse with Sir Harry Clinton's agents; I am ignorant of their persons; I do not know that such beings exist."

"How comes this British officer, then, to be found in your house, and under circumstances of no ordinary mystery? Why did you deny that he was here? why did you not produce him at once when demanded?"

"The officer himself has explained how he came," replied Mr. Morgan; "and as to my refusal to betray him, no man of honour will, I think, blame me for that. I would have as soon thought of giving up yourself, or any other American, to the British, had they come upon me as you have done, as I would have betrayed this young gentleman. He placed himself under the protection of my hospitality; and that bond even the savages respect."

"Your hospitality is of very extensive range," observed the president; "has it ever been exerted after the same fashion before?"

"I do not understand you," replied Mr. Morgan.

"It is false!" said the officer; "you perfectly understand that I allude to the transactions of a certain morning last summer, when, but for you, this young man must have fallen into our hands. Am I sufficiently explicit now?"

"Quite so," replied Mr. Morgan.

"I suppose we are not to expect from either of you," continued the officer, "a confession of the truth, and therefore the question which I am about to put will of course be put to no purpose. Have you ever held conversations together? I address myself now to both of you, or to either. Have you ever conversed on state affairs?—on matters involving the interests of the belligerent powers?—on the condition and strength of the hostile armies, and the positions of their several corps?"

The prisoners looked at one another, not in pretended

but in real surprise; they could not comprehend the object of the address, and they said so frankly, and plainly.

"I see how it is," said the president: "you will not answer because an answer must condemn you; but I have a witness here whose testimony goes as far with me as your own confession. Come forward, Pompey," exclaimed he, addressing himself to the negro, "and declare before these gentlemen what you stated to General Heath and myself this morning."

The black obeyed, and in his broken English told a tedious tale of conferences mysteriously held between his master and the English captain, of which, from his own account, he could overhear very little, and understood still less; but the purport of the whole was, to convey a persuasion that Mr. Morgan was in the habit of communicating intelligence respecting the designs and movements of the American army. Pompey was not, indeed, very explicit in his account of the means by which such information was obtained; but he was sure that the names of Washington, Rochambeau, and other revolutionary leaders, were frequently mentioned, and that much was said on both sides touching West Point, King's Ferry, Peekshill, and other rebel posts. He recollected too, that he had on various occasions surprised the gentlemen poring over maps and plans, as he believed, of the Jersey Highlands, and that on all such occasions the Englishman seemed to receive instruction, whilst his master conveyed it. Such was the substance of this man's evidence, to which the prisoners listened with a smile of unutterable contempt, whilst the judges themselves appeared by no means satisfied that proofs of treason more palpable were not produced. Nevertheless, the president, who seemed bent upon their conviction, turned to the prisoners with an air of assumed triumph, and demanded what they had to say in answer to the slave's assertions.

"Say!" exclaimed Beckwith: "what should we say? That almost every syllable the miscreant has spoken is true, yet that not the faintest resemblance to a well-grounded charge of false-dealing between Mr. Morgan and myself *has been made* out. I freely admit that we have conversed *repeatedly* on all the topics to which your respectable witness

deposes; but what is there in that to alarm the jealousy of either party?"

"But the map, the map, young man!" exclaimed the president, exultingly: "with what design was that referred to? and how came you to be a listener when it lay before you?"

Beckwith paused for a moment, to consider whether any such occurrence had ever taken place. At first his memory could discover no trace of it; nor was it till Mr. Morgan reminded him of a discussion which they had held touching the unfortunate expedition under General Burgoyne in 1777, that the fact recurred to him. Then, indeed, he explained the matter with so much candour and openness, that before any other judges his explanation must have been received as satisfactory. But the members of the present court were not thus to be diverted from a persuasion which they had once adopted. One and all they shook their heads, in undisguised disbelief; and passing on to other matters, did their best to entrap both him and his host into contradictions.

But why dwell longer upon a business, the result of which has, doubtless, been anticipated already? Let it suffice to state, that after a full hour wasted in such conversations as the preceding, the prisoners were ordered to withdraw; and the hall being cleared, this delectable court proceeded to deliberate as to the nature of the sentence to be awarded.

It will readily be credited that Davis Morgan, who, in his place of concealment, had been an attentive listener to the trial, held his very breath at this awful juncture, in order that not a syllable which fell from his father's judges might escape him. His feelings may therefore be imagined, when he heard the president address to his assistants a brief harangue, declaratory of his own conviction, that to permit either of the prisoners to escape, would be to betray their country, and to sacrifice their own character. "I have always had my suspicions of Morgan," continued he, "towards whom Congress has behaved with a very *mistaken, as well as mischievous* lenity. Are not these suspicions amply confirmed? Can we believe that an English

officer would thrust himself time after time into the dangers which beset him here, for no other purpose than to indulge a taste for shooting, or enjoy the society of a friend? Besides, what right has any American to make a friend of one who carries arms against his country? For that alone I aver that Morgan deserves death; and we cannot hang the one without the other. But it is for you, gentlemen, to decide; I can give no more than my own casting vote."

The president was] not permitted to stand alone in this sanguinary determination. Each member of the court, as his opinion was separately asked, pronounced both persons guilty, and sentence of death was in due form passed upon them.

"And now that we have discharged our duty," observed Captain Jonathan Dobson, "let us temper justice with mercy as far as the laws of war will permit. I propose that, if the commander-in-chief approve, this night be granted to these miserable men to arrange their worldly affairs, and that they suffer, as spies and traitors ought to suffer, at gun-fire in the morning."

"With all my heart," replied the president: "in which case, Captain Dobson, the charge of seeing the sentence carried into execution will devolve upon you; for I need not remind you that we have business in hand which will not permit our loitering here much longer. In the mean while, however, I must beg the favour of the court to continue assembled, whilst I acquaint the General with its proceedings,"

He rose as he spoke; but before he had advanced two paces towards the door, it flew open, and a man of middle stature, plainly dressed, and extremely corpulent, entered. The members of the court stood up to receive him; and the stranger taking off his hat, displayed the bald and flat-crowned head, which gained for General Heath, in the ranks of the American army, the nickname of the 'Marquis of Granby.'

"Well met, sir," exclaimed the president. "I was so far on my way to receive your judgment on the sentence *which we have* just pronounced. Both prisoners have been *found guilty* on the clearest testimony; and we adjudge

them, in submission to your excellency's approbation, to suffer death."

"I am sorry for it," replied the general: "I lament that more lives should fall a sacrifice to a system which I for one decidedly condemn; but I presume the evidence of their guilt admitted not of a question?"

"Not of the slightest, sir, I assure you," observed Captain Jonathan Dobson. "Our leaning has been, perhaps, too strongly towards the side of mercy; in proof of which, we humbly submit to your excellency that the execution do not take place before to-morrow morning."

"Very well, gentlemen," answered Heath. "If there be foul play here, the guilt rests upon your own heads, not upon mine. I confirm your finding, and leave you to direct the time of execution when you will. For the present, however, there are other matters to be attended to; and I must request that you repair immediately to your several corps, which are already in motion."

All made instant preparations to obey. "But what shall we do with the prisoners?" asked the staff-officer. "Are they to be removed to the rear? or shall they suffer on the spot where their crimes have been perpetrated?"

"Let them die here," answered the general. "And harkye, Captain Dobson, I know that such affairs cannot be trusted to more willing hands than yours. My orders are, that you remain where you are, with twenty men of your own troop, that you guard the prisoners carefully during the night, and see the sentence carried into execution at early dawn; after which, I expect that you will rejoin me at Peekskill, where by midnight at the latest we shall be again assembled. The rest of you, gentlemen, to your commands: we have much to do between that time and this, and time wears on apace."

The general's address was followed by an immediate breaking up of the court-martial. Leaving Captain Dobson to act the part assigned to him, the other members hurried off each to his proper station; and in five minutes after, the garrison in possession of Belmont consisted only *of the Skinner chief* and his twenty followers. The re-

mainder assembling on the paddock in front of the house, began their march after the column, which had already regained the high-road; and a perfect silence prevailed from one extremity of the vale to the other.

It was now for the first time since he took shelter in his uneasy prison that Davis Morgan ventured to look out. The hall was empty, twilight too was rapidly verging into night, and he felt that if the lives of his father and Harry Beckwith were to be preserved at all, to his exertions alone would their preservation be owing. He stole softly from his hiding-place; he opened the hall-door, looked round him, and observed that not so much as a sentinel was planted to guard against accident.

Davis was a youth of no ordinary decision and presence of mind. General Heath's instructions were not lost upon him, nor was he slow in conjecturing, that could he succeed in reaching the British lines, even yet something might be effected: he therefore set off, by a circuitous and unfrequented rout, to Kingsbridge. Davis hung upon the left flank of the American line during the continuance of that affair, of which an account has been already given. He perceived at a glance, that no serious design was entertained of forcing the post of Kingsbridge; for the countermarch of the enemy's column, almost as soon as the firing began, was not lost upon him; and he was deterred from forcing his way through the skirmishers only by the conviction, that should he even succeed, it would be impossible, at that juncture of affairs, to effect the object which he was alone desirous to effect. He accordingly lay concealed in a sort of drain or sunk fence, till the American tirailleurs began to fall back; and he never quitted it till he had satisfactorily ascertained that they were in full retreat after their main body. This done, he advanced boldly upon the British outposts. He was challenged, as a matter of course,—answered readily to the challenge; and convincing the sentry that he was alone, received permission to approach.

You need not be told of what followed. The sergeant of the guard was called, by whom he was led back to the *station of the* picket, to the officer in command of which he

made known his desire of seeing Captain Beckwith; and as the youth spoke like one deeply interested in what he said no time was lost in gratifying his wishes. Of the manner of his introduction to Oliver, and of the nature of his appeal, you are already aware.

CHAPTER VII.

WHILST Davis was thus exerting himself with an energy and discretion beyond his years, both Mr. Morgan and Harry Beckwith remained close prisoners at Belmont, in a plight as little enviable as it often falls to the lot of innocent persons to experience. From the manner of their judges, neither the one or the other entertained a very sanguine expectation that the sentence would be one of absolute acquittal; yet with the weakness, if so it deserve to be termed, which distinguishes all our reasonings with respect to ourselves, they would not for a moment believe that their execution had been determined on. Of any act in the most remote degree allied to treason, their consciences fully acquitted them; nay, how was it possible that treasonable or underhand dealings should have been carried on between men, neither of whom enjoyed the most distant opportunity of acting treacherously, had he been ever so much disposed? It was true, that a miserable slave had accused them of such proceedings; and that the court appeared willing to credit his assertions in preference to their explanation. Yet was it difficult to believe that five persons possessed of ordinary discernment, would not, when left to themselves, see on which side the truth lay; whilst it was a libel on the profession of arms to suppose that officers would be guided, especially in a case like the present, otherwise than by a conviction of the truth.

On these grounds they came to the natural conclusion, *that though their* personal liberty might for a time be *curtailed, they ran* no hazard whatever of dying an igno-

minious death; and hence, that the best course for them to pursue was to submit with a good grace to a fate which there appeared no possibility of eluding, or ameliorating.

In this delusion they were not, however, permitted long to continue. The business of the trial was scarcely concluded, and the troops were yet in the act of assembling for their march, when Captain Jonathan Dobson made his appearance in the parlour, whither they had been reconducted; and sitting down with perfect coolness at the table, still covered with glasses and decanters, applied himself once more to an occupation in which he appeared to take peculiar delight.

"I drink to our better acquaintance, gentlemen!" said he, pouring out a glass of wine, and raising it to his lips; "and it strikes me that there is no time to be lost in forming it. You know that you are both to be hanged to-morrow morning at sunrise?"

"Impossible!" exclaimed the prisoners in a breath: "it cannot be that on such evidence as was adduced against us, any court, however prejudiced, would sentence a fellow-creature to death. You jest, Captain Dobson; the thing is totally incredible."

"It will be no jesting matter by and by, however," observed the ruffian with a leer of peculiar malignancy. "When your limbs are dangling like scarecrows from the branches of a couple of trees, I guess you will find the thing a very serious, if not a very agreeable reality. However, a man can only die once, you know; and as I am left here to see that you die as you ought, my first recommendation is that you put your wordly affairs in order. In plain language, Mr. Morgan, I have to request that you make over to me without delay, all the money, plate, and other portable valuables, which happen to be within reach; that they may be applied, as the goods and chattels of traitors ought to be applied—to the service of the State and its officers."

"Captain Dobson!" replied the individual to whom he spoke, "even now I am unable to believe that you mean *what you say*. If you threaten us with death for the *purpose of* exacting from me money or plate, rest assured

that no such threat is necessary. My keys are in the writing-desk on that table; you are at liberty to open every drawer in the house, and take from it what you will. All that I request in return is, that you will loosen these cords a little; they cut my wrists dreadfully, and are not needed as a matter of security."

"As for that," replied the Skinner, "there can be no great harm in indulging you. Corporal Pike, untie the prisoners;—and look ye, order in lights; and place chairs for the gentlemen beside myself. Send some of your people to the cellar likewise, and fetch up more wine—it were pity not to make their last evening a jolly one."

The captain's orders were obeyed; the cords were removed both from Mr. Morgan and Beckwith; and candles being placed upon the table, a fresh supply of Madeira was produced. But with the Skinner's repeated invitation to fall to, his guests, as he facetiously termed them, refused to comply.

"Now it strikes me," observed the ruffian coolly, pouring out at the same time a large goblet of wine, which he drank off at a draught, "that you stand grievously in your own light just at present. A short life and a merry, has been my doctrine throughout; and seeing your lives likely to be short enough, in the devil's name why not make them merry to the last?"

"Wretch!" exclaimed Beckwith, unable any longer to suppress his indignation; "for man I cannot call you: is it possible that what you say is true, and that you can still jest with the miseries of dying men?"

"Well rated! boy," shouted the Skinner; "spoken like any twaddler, or old woman of threescore. Jest! why what the devil would you have me do?—sing psalms, or say prayers? Jonathan Dobson has no great skill in such matters; he has been a merry blade all his days, and has made many a poor devil laugh as near the gallows as you are; and when it comes to his own turn, he means to laugh there too. However, I have no wish to press my company upon you, if it be unpleasant. Mr. Morgan, I avail myself of your very liberal and gentlemanlike offer," *(taking the keys at the same time from the place where they lay,)* "*for which I shall* not fail to erect a stone to your

memory; for as to your own destiny, that, you may rely upon it, is irremediable. You die to-morrow morning as soon as the sun rises; so I commend you to your meditations, whilst I proceed to place the legitimate seal upon your effects."

"For heaven's sake!" exclaimed Mr. Morgan, as the Skinner made a movement to withdraw, "if the case be really so, grant me one request. My daughter, my beloved Cecily, and my son,—let me see and embrace them once more before I die!"

"Your son! ten thousand devils seize the scorpion! Where is he?" exclaimed the Skinner, starting up as he spoke. "What-ho! there. Let every hole and corner in the house be searched for that young viper, whose will to sting was shown fairly enough, though his ability, thank God, did not answer to it. How in the name of every thing damnable, came I to forget that such a monster existed? But no matter, he cannot be far off; and I will take it upon me, in return for his kind intentions towards myself, to make him your companion both to-day and to-morrow."

"But my daughter, my Cecily!" shrieked the old man.

"Curse your daughter!" replied the Skinner, as he twirled the bunch of keys in his hand, and quitted the room.

What the feelings of the unhappy father were at this moment, I leave you to judge. Not gifted by nature with a mind particularly vigorous, and hardly as yet recovered from the debilitating effect of a heavy domestic calamity, Mr. Morgan sunk into a state of despondency so pitiable, as in a great measure to draw away his companion's thoughts from his own condition.

"My children! my children!" exclaimed he, clasping his now loosened hands together, "what will become of them, left in this cold world without a protector, without a friend on whom to rely for assistance or advice! And this must be Cecily's fate,—the fate of her whom I have reared with so much tenderness,—who bears the very impress of *her sainted mother* stamped both upon her form and on her *heart!* And Davis too, did he not speak of making him *my companion* both now and to-morrow morning? Will th

barbarian murder young as well as old—the child with the parent? Oh! Mr. Beckwith, what have you done? how have you brought ruin upon a family, that never did you wrong, never wished you otherwise than happy!"

Beckwith was deeply affected by the energy of his friend's despair; and the more so, as he could not but feel that, of the sad scene before him, he was the cause, though the innocent one. He would have spoken comfort to the unhappy father, had he known where to look for it; but the words died on his lips, and he could utter only a groan expressive of bitter anguish. He turned round, however, to the troopers, who, three in number, still remained in the room, and in a firm, but not harsh voice, requested that they would leave them to themselves.

"You can just as effectually provide for our security," continued he, "by watching at the door and outside the window; and I am sure you will not refuse to men in our situation, the privilege of conversing together unrestrained by the presence of strangers."

The American soldiers, less inhuman than their leader, exhibited evident signs of commiseration as Beckwith addressed them. The corporal, in particular, seemed greatly moved by the contemplation of Mr. Morgan's grief, and in a tone of marked feeling expressed his readiness to do any thing that would at all contribute to their comfort. "I fear, however," continued he, "that to obey your wishes in this particular is beyond my power, seeing that I have received no instructions to that effect from Captain Dobson; and the captain is not one lightly to overlook an offence committed by those under him. But my comrades will relieve you of their presence; and for me, you may depend upon it that I will not watch your movements, at least with an eye of idle curiosity."

So saying, the honest fellow ordered his companions to withdraw, whilst he himself, retired into a distant corner and sat down. "God bless you, friend!" exclaimed Mr. Morgan; "you, at least, seem to have the heart of a man, —*you must be a parent*, otherwise you could not speak and *act as you do.*"

Mr. Morgan was interrupted here by a sound as of

sons struggling outside the door. The noise was not indeed that of a tumult, as when men are opposed to men in close and desperate strife, but rather such as arises from an effort on the part of some individual to make way through a crowd which would obstruct his passage. This lasted for a moment only, and then came the sound of a voice, which, if heard only once, could never again be forgotten. "Let me pass, let me pass, if ye be men!" shrieked Cecily, wildly; "I must and will see my father!"

"My child! my child!" exclaimed the old man, running frantically to the door;—but before he could reach it the corporal was at his side. "Stand back, for God's sake, sir!" cried the honest fellow. "It is not that I do not feel for you,—but were you seen there by other eyes besides mine, the consequences might be serious. I will introduce your daughter."

So saying, he undid the latch, and in the next moment Cecily was in the arms of her father. "My father, my beloved father!" exclaimed she, clinging wildly round his neck, "why is this? Why would they have kept me from you? And you too, Harry? surely, surely they have told me falsehoods. You are not prisoners,—you are not condemned to die,—you have done nothing to deserve death, —oh, nothing, nothing: they cannot dip their hands in the blood of the innocent!"

"Bless thee, my Cecily!" exclaimed the wretched old man, "a father's last and holiest blessing rest upon thy head! They have told you but the truth, though indeed it was cruel to do so; our hours are numbered, and to-morrow you will be an orphan!"

A cry, piercing, shrill, and terrible, burst from the lips of the agitated girl. She did not faint; for her bosom continued to heave, and her eyes, opened to their fullest stretch, turned alternately from her lover to her father, and from her father to her lover;—but it seemed as if this confirmation of a rumour too horrible to have been hitherto credited, had driven reason at once and for ever from her throne. She gasped wildly for breath, which came for a time in sobs, and with great apparent difficulty; and then *tearing herself* suddenly from her father's arms, burst into

a loud hysteric laugh. "An orphan—I am an orphan!" shrieked she: "and you dead, and Harry dead, and my mother, and Davis,—all, all in one grave! Oh, no! no! you mistake! it is a dream, it is all a dream, a wild baseless dream, such as comes upon us when we are in a fever during a night like this. Hark!" continued she, turning her ear hastily towards the window, "did I not tell you there would be a storm to-night? There it comes! The wind rises—and that—that is a peal of thunder—I know it, I know it, for it never thunders without causing my brain to burn, and then I have fearful dreams."

Though speaking under a paroxysm of strong delirium, poor Cecily was not at present altogether deceived by the workings of her own disordered fancy. The storm, of which notice has already been taken, was begun, and the wind swept in tremendous gusts through the woods adjoining. A crash rather than a peal of thunder, too, burst even as she had described it, and the rain came down as from a waterspout, hissing and splashing with the violence of a cataract.

All present were struck with the extraordinary coincidence; for of the gathering together of the clouds they had been too busy to take notice, and when the strange drama began, which appeared now to be drawing to its close, the heavens were clear, and the air mild and serene. But the sensation of surprise, and the abstraction consequent upon it, lasted only for a moment. Mr. Morgan and Harry Beckwith were too deeply interested in the scene before them, to permit any matter not immediately connected with it, to occupy their thoughts. They saw only the melancholy condition of Cecily, in which every consideration of their own fate was swallowed up.

"Cecily, my own Cecily!" exclaimed the youth, taking one of her hands, whilst Mr. Morgan affectionately held the other, "why thus distress yourself? why look so wild and haggard?—Compose yourself, love; your father spoke but at random, and things are not so desperate as he represented them. Do you not know me, Cecily?" continued he, observing that her eye was bent upon his, but with a vacant and unmeaning stare.

"Know you! yes!" replied Cecily. "I know you are Oliver Beckwith, and you would alienate your cousin's affections from me if you could. But there I defy you. Harry has sworn to be faithful, and not all your arts will induce him to break his vow. But did they not say that he was dead?—and my father too! that he died? Poor old man, they might have spared him, I think, even if they murdered Harry."

"Oh, God! what have I done?" cried Mr. Morgan, striking his forehead violently with one of his hands. "My child, my poor child is a maniac, and I, miserable that I am, am the cause."

Mr. Morgan burst into tears,—a movement that did not escape the notice of his daughter. She turned kindly towards him, and said in a low sweet voice, "You weep, old man,—why do you weep?—are you unhappy? No! no! you must not be unhappy. All is well now; my father is in heaven, and Harry is in heaven; and in heaven, you know, our happiness is perfect. Dry up your tears, we shall go to them there in good time."

As she uttered these words, she drew forth a handkerchief, and made as if she would herself have done that kind office for him; but he averted his face, and wept the more bitterly.

"How is this?" asked she, turning to Beckwith: "he is very miserable, yet you, like myself, cannot weep with him. Oh! my poor eyeballs, how they burn—burn—burn!" As she spoke, she passed her small white hand over her eyes, and then gazed at it attentively. "There is no moisture," said she, "yet he weeps."

"Cecily! Cecily! my beloved, look not thus; turn your eyes upon me. Do you not recognise your own Harry? It is myself,—I am not dead, dearest,—I live, and shall live to call you mine: these are mere wanderings of your own imagination. And that is your father: he weeps only because you do not know him. Call him father, and his tears will cease at once."

At this moment the door of the parlour was thrown violently open, and Captain Dobson rushed in.

"*Thou old knave!*" said he, addressing himself to Mr. *Morgan, whilst his* cheek burned and his eyes flashed with

rage, "where is thy cockatrice of a son? Tell me how I am to find him; otherwise, by all the powers of hell, even now I will try the broiling plan, and save your weasand from being stretched by roasting you alive."

"I know nothing of the youth," answered Mr. Morgan, drying up his tears. "If he have escaped, I thank God for it; but I could not, if I would, direct you where to search for him."

"It is false, dotard!" replied the Skinner, fiercely. "You know that that picture does not cover the only lurking-place in this den of treachery; and you ought to know by this time, that if you attempt to deceive me further, you shall not escape my vengeance. Produce the imp, I say, or—Holla! what have we here?" continued he, observing for the first time the form of Cecily,—"that little minx at large! And you, Corporal Pike, what are you about in the corner? Blubbering like a turnip-headed driveller as you are! Broken-hearted, I guess, to witness so much family suffering! By heavens! it is enough to drive a man mad! Call in your people instantly, and see that the girl be carried back to the place from whence she came; and mind me, no more of this chicken-heartedness—it is a thing I cannot endure."

"You have never found me chicken-hearted in danger, captain," answered the corporal, moving towards the door; "and if I do feel for these persons, I guess there is no great harm in it."

"Silence, scoundrel!" exclaimed Dobson; "say but another word and I will cleave you to the chine.—Here, men," continued he, addressing himself to the two soldiers who had by this time entered,—"bear this woman hence, and see that she be on no account permitted to quit the apartment again. I thought my orders on that head had been sufficiently explicit already."

The men obeyed, and as the poor girl walked unresistingly away, in melancholy ignorance both of her conductors and those whom she left behind, neither Mr. Morgan nor Harry Beckwith made any attempt to hinder her removal. *To have pursued a different* line of conduct, indeed, would *have been to subject* themselves and her to personal insult

for no purpose. But it was well that the respectful manner of the troopers took away even the desire to oppose them; for it is not always practicable, when feeling is strongly excited, to listen to the voice of Reason, however plainly she may speak. Nevertheless, the satisfaction which they experienced from observing that, though removed, she was removed gently, was soon forgotten amid other and less agreeable occurrences. Captain Dobson waited only till the door closed, when he again returned to the question of Davis's absence.

"I am in no humour for trifling," said he, sternly. "I ask again, and once for all, will you, of your own accord, give the information I seek? or must I force it from you?"

"I have no information to give," said Mr. Morgan, timidly. "I know nothing more of the lad than yourself. I beseech you, do not torment me for no purpose."

"How can the case be otherwise?" asked Beckwith. "The young man fled, as you might have seen, without holding any communication with his father."

"Silence! sir," cried the Skinner, imperiously. "Nobody has requested your opinion, and it will be time enough to give it when it is asked. But as to you, traitor," and he again addressed himself to Mr. Morgan, "I warn you that further equivocation will avail you nothing. Tell me where to find your son, or roast you shall before you be ten minutes older!"

"I cannot, indeed I cannot," replied Mr. Morgan, in a voice weak with terror. "I am in your power, and you may do with me what you will; but were you to tear the flesh from my bones with red-hot pincers, I could not satisfy you on a matter of which I myself know nothing."

"Very well," replied the Skinner, coolly, and walked away.

For an instant or two after he quitted them, the prisoners were disposed to hope that he did not seriously intend to carry into execution the threat to which he had given utterance. It is true that neither of them was ignorant of *the horrid barbarities* which the class of persons to which *Captain Jonathan* Dobson belonged, were in the habit of

committing. Robbers rather than soldiers by profession, the Skinners on the one side, like the Cowboys on the other, were a disgrace as well as a nuisance to the powers that employed them; their cruelty being equalled only by their rapacity, as that, again, had no parallel any where. It is true that during the latter years of the war, strenuous exertions were made, more especially on the side of the Republicans, to suppress them; and not a few bands which had drawn together for plunder only, were compelled to act as soldiers under fixed leaders. Of this number Jonathan Dobson's troop was one; and Jonathan himself, from a chief of lawless banditti, was metamorphosed into a captain of irregular cavalry. But habits acquired during seven years of uncontrolled licentiousness, were not to be overcome in a moment; and even now the captain of cavalry was as reckless of the sufferings of his fellow-creatures as had been the Skinner chief. This was not the first occasion upon which Jonathan Dobson had applied fire to wring from his captives such information as he wanted. Not that the circumstances of the case were exactly similar, inasmuch as hitherto the torture had been used to compel a surrender of money supposed to be concealed, and at such concealment, Mr. Morgan had made no attempt. But the man who was capable of roasting a human being, in order to obtain possession of a few worthless dollars, was not very likely to shrink from the same experiment when the indulgence of a strong feeling of anger was at issue. Such were the ideas which passed in dreadful array through the mind of Mr. Morgan during his tormentor's absence; and the event speedily proved that they had not been conjured up by terror absolutely groundless.

In the mean while the storm continued to rage with unabated fury; and so tremendous was the uproar it occasioned, that all lesser noises were lost in its tumult. Once, indeed, and once only, there came upon the ears of Beckwith and Mr. Morgan the sound as of wood newly kindled,—a sort of crackling such as boards, when set fire to, produce,—which caused the very flesh, at least of the latter, to creep. *Presently the door was* again opened, and the strong light

which came in from the hall, showed that the sense of hearing had not deceived them.

"Now then," cried the Skinner, "the fire is ready, and once more I ask you, whether you will direct me where to find your son?"

"You ask in vain, indeed you do," shrieked Mr. Morgan; "I cannot tell, as I desire to be saved, whither he is gone. If you have searched the premises through, you have done all that I could direct you to do: for, indeed, indeed, there is no secret closet except this. For the love of Heaven, as you hope for mercy yourselves, do not torture me!" exclaimed the unhappy man wildly, as four or five ruffians advanced towards him; "you cannot force from me that which I have not to communicate: did I know where he is, though it were his life you sought, I would speak out."

But Mr. Morgan's supplications were addressed to beings perfectly callous to such appeals. Without a moment's pause, they pressed upon him, and were already stretching forth their hands to seize him, when, not Beckwith only but Corporal Pike himself interfered.

"Captain Dobson," cried the latter, "I have witnessed more of these matters than my conscience exactly approves and, by heavens! I will not stand idly by to witness another. These gentlemen are condemned by lawful authority to die; but I know no right that you or any other man has to inflict upon them a sentence heavier than the laws have awarded. Stand back, I say; the first that lays finger upon my prisoner dies."

The brave fellow levelled his carbine as he spoke, and the troopers being totally without arms, instantly retreated.

Not so the captain. Calling aloud for the rest of the troop to come to his assistance, he drew his sabre, and sprang towards the corporal, who, without firing, kept the muzzle of his piece steadily pointed towards his opponent but before either the leader's call could be obeyed, or blow struck, or trigger pulled, other and no less unlooked for events occurred. The voice of the sentinel who stood the front door, was suddenly heard over the roar of the

tempest. He challenged loudly, but his challenge was unanswered; and before it could be repeated, the report of a musket rang through the house. "To arms! to arms! the enemy are upon us!" was echoed in all quarters.

Instantly there was a hubbub in the hall. Carabines, pistols, and muskets, were discharged; and the door being burst open, six of the Skinners rushed furiously in, followed by twice as many men in British uniforms. "Forward, forward!" shouted a voice which Harry instantly recognised as that of his cousin. Instantly, a clashing of steel, mixed with a confused rattle of fire-arms, ensued; but the contest, though fierce and desperate, was of short duration. The brave and good corporal, pierced by three balls, fell dead; Captain Dobson was pinned to the earth by as many bayonets, and the remainder of the Skinners, throwing down their weapons, entreated for quarter.

Then it was, and not till then, that Oliver Beckwith threw himself into the arms of his cousin; whilst Mr. Morgan, clasped in the embrace of his brave and enterprising son, received an assurance, which he could not distrust, of his safety. But there was no time to be lost in idle protestations of mutual affection. Several of the enemy flying on the first alarm, had effected their escape, in spite of every effort to prevent it; and there could be no doubt, that should the report of the present expedition reach Peekskill before its retreat was rendered secure, immediate measures would be taken to cut off the party engaged in it. Oliver accordingly urged his friends to mount and fly without a moment's delay; and as he found them by no means indisposed to obey his suggestions, Cecily was promptly removed from her apartment, and placed before her brother upon one of the Skinners' fleetest chargers. The soldiers, of whom not one had fallen, were gathered together; and in ten minutes from their arrival at the point to be assailed, the whole troop were in full flight towards Kingsbridge.

They had not, however, gained the bottom of the valley —they were not, indeed, advanced much above half-way between Belmont and the high-road—when a spectacle *attracted their notice,* upon which few could look, even in *their circumstances,* without horror. The elegant villa,

where, of late, such trying scenes had been acted, was one sheet of flame. In arranging his furnace on the flagged pavement of the hall, Captain Jonathan Dobson had not been very particular in avoiding the wood-work, and the progress which the flames made from fagot to fagot till they gained the skirting, was not observed in the turmoil which ensued. The consequence was, that in five minutes after the house was abandoned, it caught fire. Being constructed entirely of timber, the flames spread from room to room with inconceivable rapidity; and now asserted their empire over every part of a building, in no quarter capable of opposing them.

I need not say, that the strong light cast by the blazing mansion over the woods and green hills far and near, produced no common effect, combating, as the flames appeared to do, against the torrents of rain which fell upon them. But this was not the only, nor the most remarkable feature in the night view. There appeared all at once, in the midst of the fire, the figure of a man, vainly struggling, as it seemed, to make his way into the open air; and, brief as the opportunity afforded of watching him was, he was instantly recognised as the Skinner. But his effort to escape from the devouring element was vain. Enfeebled by his wounds, he seemed scarcely capable of raising one limb after the other; and he had just placed a hand upon the outer ledge of a window-sill, when the substance on which he stood suddenly gave way, and he fell back into the flames. He was seen no more; and his shrieks, if he uttered any, were unheard amidst the roar of the flames, and the bellowing of the storm.

My story is told; for what remains to be narrated, a few words will suffice to express. You have doubtless anticipated that Oliver Beckwith was no sooner made aware of the perilous situation of his friends, than he applied to his commanding officer, and obtained permission to attempt their rescue. For this purpose a body of forty chosen men, each well mounted and fully armed, was assigned to him, at the head of which, with Davis as *his guide, he* lost no time in setting out. Taking a circ*uitous and* unfrequented road, they did not reach Belmo

till long past midnight, nor till their arrival, if delayed a few minutes longer, might have been too late. Once there, however, and every thing else went on as could have been wished. With great skill and extreme caution Oliver surrounded the house, making his people advance in a circle, which closed as it drew towards a centre; and assisted by the heavy rain, and the wind, which still blew in gusts, he himself, with a dozen of his trustiest followers gained the door before they were observed.

Of what followed you have already been sufficiently informed. Before the American vidette could repeat his challenge, he was shot dead at his post; and the party bursting in, overpowered in a few minutes all the resistance which men taken, as the enemy were, by surprise, ventured to offer. Nor was the retreat less skilfully or less successfully conducted than the advance. Without the occurrence of a single casuality, the whole party gained the lines; and great and general was the rejoicing, among all ranks, when their return was announced.

With respect to Cecily, the shock which her nerves had undergone, produced, as it was to be supposed that it would, a violent fever, which confined her for several weeks to bed, and placed life itself in imminent hazard; but youth, and a constitution naturally good, triumphed over the malady, and she recovered to be, what she had ever been, the admiration of all that knew her. I need not add, that her marriage with Harry Beckwith followed soon after. The latter, receiving from his father-in-law a much larger fortune than he had any right to expect, served on till the conclusion of the war. He then quitted the army, and is now, I believe, one of the leading men in the state where he incurred so many dangers, and won so fair a bride.

THE conclusion of the above tale drew forth, as the conclusion of its predecessor had done, the general applause of the listeners. This was followed by a bumper to the health of the President; after which the party broke up, and we retired each to his own apartment.

It is not necessary to occupy the reader's time, by entering into any minute detail of the mode in which the earlier part of the following day was spent. Enough is done when I inform him, that the hint which I deemed it expedient to drop touching my own departure was met with a general burst of condemnation, and that it was pronounced absolutely inconsistent with the standing rules of the place, to permit a brother soldier to give up his quarters in the Hospital, after only a few hours' occupation. The time might come, it was insinuated, when I should consider it advisable to offer myself as a candidate for admission; and having it in my power to obtain a tolerably perfect insight into the system according to which affairs were managed, I should act very imprudently, did I scruple to avail myself of it. In a word, no reasoning of mine, having reference to the prosecution of my journey, would be listened to. One day more, they insisted upon my spending among them; and as the preceding had certainly been the reverse of a dull day, it required no very vehement exertion on their part to overcome my scruples.

Having thus consented to continue his guest during four-and-twenty hours longer, I readily gave myself up, in every other respect, to the guidance of Major Cohorn; and I found that he was no less efficient as a director of the business of the morning, than he was able as the president of a mess-table. We fished the stream together; and the great success which attended our efforts is attributable, I *must confess*, mainly to the skill of my companion. There *was not a pool*, nor a linn, with which he was not familiarly *acquainted*. He knew to a tittle the kind of fly which

f the river and the condition of the day demanded;
: threw his line with such dexterity, that the most
rout in the reach could scarcely avoid it. Moreover, I
him at the water's side, as I had found him at the
-table, an extremely entertaining companion. There
ed to be no limits to his conversational powers; his
ites and stories were endless, insomuch that I saw
under the necessity of doing nothing more than
nally to wind him up, and then let him run down at
ure.

ong other subjects on which I endeavoured to draw
ajor out, was the American war of Independence.
the tale which he had told on the preceding evening,
l as from his conversation in general, I learned that
l borne arms on that occasion; and I was curious to
as much information as possible, respecting a con-
ıore prolific, perhaps, in personal adventure, than any
in which British soldiers have ever been engaged. I
him perfectly at home here, as on other topics; but
ortunately happened, that in the very campaign con-
g which I was most inquisitive, he had not served;
s not attached to General Burgoyne's army, and as a
ary consequence, knew nothing, except by report, of
tunes. "But your thirst for knowledge," continued
ıeed not on that account remain unslaked. There
among us, a Captain Macdirk, who acted no insig-
ıt part on that occasion; though, like many other
ing men, he received but a scurvy reward; and I
: you desire it, request him to give us this evening a
:ted narrative of his services."

:pressed myself extremely anxious to obtain a minute
ıt of an enterprise so memorable, more especially
ın eye-witness; and the Major very cheerfully un-
ık to gratify my wishes. Having again taken the
at dinner in virtue of his hospitality towards me, the
erson on whom he called, after the removal of the
was Captain Macdirk, who immediately related the
ing *Legend of* SARATOGA.

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SARATOGA.

SARATOGA.

CHAPTER I.

SELDOM has Montreal witnessed a scene of higher excitement, or more warlike bustle, than was presented to the eyes of its inhabitants on the morning of the 8th of June, 1777. The first streaks of dawn were just beginning to redden the eastern sky, when a deafening roll of drums, and clamour of bugles, roused men, women, and children from their slumbers; whilst soldiers, pouring in great numbers from almost every habitation, hastened to assume their well-known stations.

It was on this day that General Burgoyne, having drawn together the whole of his army, and made the best preparations which circumstances would allow for the transport of stores and provisions, resolved to commence his march in the direction of Fort Ticonderoga, and to open a campaign from which the most brilliant results were expected to accrue to the cause of loyalty and good faith throughout America at large.

The corps of which General Burgoyne assumed the command, consisted of rather more than seven thousand men. It was made up of three thousand seven hundred and twenty-four British; three thousand and sixteen German soldiers of the line; of four hundred and seventy-three artillerymen, and two hundred and fifty Provincials; and the train of *guns attached* to it fell not short of forty *pieces, including cannons,* mortars, and royals, of all kind *and calibers.*

I know very well that in these times it is a common practice to speak slightingly of the equipments and general appearance of the troops which served during the first American war. No doubt, some of their appointments were ridiculous enough; the little three-cornered hat, for example, was but an inconvenient covering for a head liable to constant exposure both to sun and shower; and the tight breeches and gaiters, with the long-flapped coat, were not exactly calculated to give the greatest elasticity to the limbs, or freedom to the body. But in spite of these defects, if such they deserve to be called, you must permit me, who have looked upon the soldiers of both periods, to declare, that I never beheld a finer or more imposing band than was brought on this eventful day under my observation. The men were, for the most part, in the prime of life, well-made, robust, hardy, and active; they appeared to enjoy the finest health, and their spirits were mantling to the brim. Among the officers one disposition, and one only, prevailed, from the hoary veteran down to the unfledged standard-bearer. They were all confident of success, and spoke and acted, not like persons embarking upon a business beset with perils, and of dubious issue, but as if a mere triumphal journey were before them.

I have said that this splendid regular army was accompanied by two hundred and fifty Provincials, raised for the service immediately in view, and acting as militia only. These men, on whose acquaintance with the nature of Indian warfare, and the general face of the country, considerable reliance was placed, were not imbodied into one corps or battalion; on the contrary, they were divided into four independent companies called Rangers, or Marksmen: of which three were composed of Canadians, the descendants of Frenchmen, and officered by their own feudal chiefs, or Seigneurs; whilst one, made up of Scottish emigrants, or the descendants of old soldiers who had established themselves along the St. Lawrence as settlers, was headed by a gallant countryman of their own, by name Fraser.

The latter company received marked attention from the *general* commanding. One hundred young men, unrivalled *in point of* bodily strength and activity, composed it; who

habits from their childhood had been such as to inure them to the duties of light troops, and whose aim with their own weapon, the rifle, was unerring. There was not an individual among them who would have been at a loss to find his way, had he been cast in the centre of a wilderness, provided he was informed in what direction the point lay, and could obtain a sight of the sun by day, and the stars by night; and as to privations, cold, hunger, thirst, and bodily fatigue, they all to a man set such at defiance.

It was my good fortune to commence my military career in that very distinguished company. Being nearly related to its commander, as well as his personal acquaintance, I readily accepted his invitation to accompany him in the character of a volunteer: with the assurance, not from him only, but from those higher in rank and of superior influence, that the first commission which should fall vacant should be conferred upon me.

A young soldier is seldom very tardy in obeying the signal which summons him to the opening of his maiden campaign. The night of the 7th had been to me a sleepless one. Aware of the mighty movements which were in preparation, my mind was a great deal too busy in comparing the past with the future, to permit my body to obtain much rest; and when I did fall into a doze, it was to dream sometimes of home, and the scenes of domestic happiness which had passed there; sometimes of my prospects, and intended behaviour before the enemy. From such a slumber as this, you will not be surprised to learn that the first blast of the bugle roused me. I leaped out of bed in a moment; hurried through my toilet as if life and death depended on its completion; and then, with all the ardour of a volunteer of seventeen, sallied forth into the street. Here all was bustle and preparation; the hum of voices, the hurried tread of feet, the rattle of arms, and the occasional brief word of command, gave notice that, even in the dark, men knew their stations, and that they jostled one another in order to reach the several points where confusion would give place to absolute order. This state of things was not, however, of long continuance. Before the increasing dawn rendered objects distinctly visible, the

only sound was a sort of stifled shuffling, as if officers were passing along the fronts of companies to ascertain that they were correctly formed; and then, for the space of a quarter of an hour, or perhaps something more, all was silent as the grave.

Like those about me, I had taken my wonted station on the right of the company, and was watching with an anxiety such as I never experienced before, the gradual approach of day, when a roll of drums taken up in the rear, and passing on slowly to the front, gave notice that the general himself was on the ground. I looked back, and my glance fell upon a spectacle well calculated to inspire the most timid with courage and confidence. Upwards of four thousand men were behind me, formed in the nicest order into columns of subdivisions, and extending farther than the eye could reach, through the whole length of the street, into a common beyond; whilst their banners, held aloft as the general and his suite passed on, waved triumphantly in a slight breeze, which rose with the sun.

As the mounted cavalcade swept along, regiment after regiment stood at attention, with bayonets fixed and muskets shouldered, till at last it came to our turn, whose station was at the head of the parade, to receive our chief. We did so, advancing our rifles, and holding ourselves steady to the front; while the general, pulling off his hat, answered the salute with a low bow. He then addressed himself to Captain Fraser in terms of high commendation as to the appearance and steadiness of his men; spoke cheeringly to the men themselves, by reminding them of the honourable post which they held; and then solemnly wishing God speed to the right, and the arms of our king and country! gave the word to advance. It was answered by a hearty cheer, which rolled back like thunder from battalion to battalion; after which we struck off in threes from the right of companies, and the march began.

Long before this final movement was made, every door and window in Montreal was crowded with spectators, who *bade us farewell* with the waving of handkerchiefs, and *some of them* even with tears. Doubtless there were many *in this warlike* group, who felt at the moment what it is

leave behind those whom they value more than life itself. For my own part, however, I experienced no such sensation. My acquaintance extended no further than to the family where I had been accidently billeted, and from whom, to say the truth, I had received no particular marks of attention; so I replied to the salutations of the people with the most perfect indifference. In a few moments all thought of them and the city was laid aside; and I looked forward only to the great events in which I was about to be an actor.

The spring of 1777 chanced to be remarkably inclement, even in this naturally inclement climate. Much heavy rain had fallen, which cutting up the half-formed road that communicated between Montreal and Fort St. John, rendered our journey not only toilsome, but extremely tardy. It is true that every possible exertion had been used to remedy this evil, strong working parties having been long employed in improving the old path, and cutting out a new one; but their efforts had failed in rendering the way practicable for heavy carriages, and even the infantry experienced no little inconvenience in traversing it. Under these circumstances, it was judged necessary to divide our force, and to send the artillery, with the commissariat and hospital stores, under a competent escort from Quebec,—whilst we alone pushed across from Montreal by land, with directions to meet at a certain point near the southern extremity of Lake Champlain.

At the period to which my present narrative refers, there was nothing particularly interesting in the general appearance of the country which separates Montreal from the bank of the Chambly. For a while we advanced through the heart of an immense prairie, whose sandy surface was in many places left bare, and in others covered with huge patches of long dry grass; by degrees the prairie gave place to stunted thickets, and these again were succeeded by a wide-spreading forest of tall trees and impervious underwood.

The case was somewhat different, when, passing the forest, we began to face the stream, and took our toilsome journey in the direction of Lake Champlain. At first

indeed, a broad and placid river, hedged in by low flat banks, covered, like the country beyond them, with majestic oaks, was all that marked the change; but as we drew nearer and nearer to its source, the character of the stream varied, and the scenery assumed at every step more and more of the bearing of a Highland landscape. First the Narrows, about halfway between Fort St. John and the mouth of the South river, drew powerfully upon the admiration of the stranger,—where the level banks gradually swelled into hillocks, and became at last little else than abrupt precipices,—and where the water, hemmed in by these rugged barriers, roared and fretted over its bed with the noise of a cataract. These passed, the eye was again delighted with a broad expanse, which, in its turn, led only to rapids and broken falls; till at last, on nearing the point where it rushes from its gigantic prison, a scene of indescribable sublimity burst upon us. Before us lay the waters of Lake Champlain, an enormous sheet of unruffled glass, stretching away some ninety or a hundred miles to the south, and widening and straitening as rocks and cliffs projected, in the most fantastic shapes, into its channel. Nor is the scene, like that beside Lake Erie or Ontario, rendered desolate by the very extent of water embraced in it. Though measuring, as I have already said, full a hundred miles in length, Lake Champlain nowhere exceeds fifteen, and in many places falls short of one mile, in breadth; whilst its bosom is beautifully diversified by islands and promontories all of them rich with the most luxuriant vegetation and varied foliage. On each side, again, is a thick and uninhabited wilderness, now rising up into mountain, now falling down into glen: where the lordly oak mingles with the chestnut and the pine, and shrubs of every hue and form are abundant; while a noble background is presented towards the west by the Green Mountains, whose summits appear to pierce even into the clouds.

I have said that throughout the whole of our journey we found the roads extremely bad, and that the march was *in consequence* performed, not only with great fatigue, but *slowly*. From the hour of our arrival at the Narrows a *series of difficulties* came in our way, which it required

the patience and zeal of men and officers to meet and overcome. For the space of many miles, not only were the bateaux rendered useless, as a means of conveying the stores and guns; but both stores and vessels were necessarily dragged to the shore, and carried, by the land column, beyond the influence of the cataract. This fell heavily upon persons who, as is usual at the outset of an undertaking, were less able to cope with difficulties than after experience had taught them to disregard them; and it was the more burdensome at present because, through a distressing deficiency in horses, the men were compelled to perform tasks upon which neither they nor their officers had been led to calculate. Nevertheless, every thing was done, if not without a murmur, at all events in perfect good-humour; and we were rewarded for our exertions by beholding the flotilla move in majestic order up the lake.

The place of rendezvous fixed upon by General Burgoyne was the left bank of the river Bouquet, a small stream which, rising in the Green Mountains, falls into the lake at no great distance from Crown Point. The head of the column reached it on the 18th, having performed a march of upwards of ninety miles in ten days; and by the 26th, the rear was well closed up, and all the barges and vessels of war and transports were at anchor. Here tents, with other conveniences, such as blankets, kettles, and culinary utensils of various kinds, were served out; and here, for the first time since quitting Montreal, was a regular encampment formed. And seldom has an army halted in a position more favourable. We occupied a beautiful valley, surrounded on three sides by gentle hills, and on the fourth by the lake, sufficiently clear to allow of pasturage for our animals, yet wooded, so as to screen us from the rays of the summer's sun; whilst, our outposts stretching along the heights, which, in case of need, were marked out as the battle-ground, every feeling of apprehension on the score of an attack was prevented.

You are, doubtless, aware that General Burgoyne took up the ground I have described, not so much with a view of refreshing his troops, as to make his final arrangements with

certain Indian tribes, for whose assistance in the pro inroad he had already applied. Having appointe spot as the proper point of conference, he was met, i diately on his arrival, by a runner, who informed hi the Chiefs of the Five Nations, with a formidable b warriors, were encamped in the hills, and ready to i him. The general made no hesitation as to com with this proposition: he appointed the 21st a day of meeting; and he set out at an early hour, at by most of his principal officers, under an escort of light companies, to keep his appointment.

As Fraser's riflemen were so fortunate as to co part of the force employed on this occasion, I had portunity of being an eye-witness to the ceremonies ensued; and extremely curious as well as interestin proved to be. After a short march of about half a in a direction towards the source of the Bouquet, rived at a sort of glade, or woody ravine, in which of four hundred warriors were assembled, their te wigwams being but partially concealed along the a sloping eminence, in the rear.

Nothing could exceed the grotesque but strikir pearance which that extraordinary group presente we entered the valley at the lower end, the ass which occupied the opposite extremity, gradually upon us, and we beheld them seated cross-legged, profound silence, excepting three or four chiefs, wh stood upright. Having advanced within a short d of them, the escort halted, when the general pro alone towards the front, and made the sign of pe raising his hands in the air, and then laying them bosom. The chiefs immediately acknowledged the tion, approached him, knelt down, and kissed his h token both of amity and submission. He was then to sit, the chiefs seating themselves near him; a some moments all were again silent.

Whilst these ceremonies were passing between the *of the two hosts*, both the warriors and the general's *maintained* an attitude of perfect indifference and *session.* The former appeared, indeed, to take n

whatever in matters which were well known to have occupied long and painfully their whole thoughts. But when the interpreter arose, and gave notice that the English chief was about to speak, they drew gradually round him, and listened with the deepest attention. You might have heard a pin drop at every interval in a discourse which assured this savage throng of the esteem and protection of their Great Father; and when the conditions on which their services would be accepted and rewarded, came to be explained, their very breathing seemed repressed, lest the most minute syllable should escape them. It was not, however, in accordance with their dispositions or tastes to be told that all bloodshed, except in fair fight, was prohibited; and that he who took the scalp of a woman or a child, or put to death a prisoner who had once submitted, would receive, not reward, but the most summary punishment. A gloomy silence, interrupted only by an occasional low growl, followed the conclusion of this portion of the address; indeed, it appeared as if the very purpose for which the assembly had been called together was about to be defeated. But at last an old chief, whom we observed whispering, for some time, first to one and then to another of the warriors near him, stood up, and spoke with extreme vehemence of manner, as follows:

"I stand up in the name of all the nations present, to assure our father that we have attentively listened to his discourse. We receive you as our father, because, when you speak, we hear the voice of our Great Father beyond the great lake. We rejoice in the approbation you have expressed of our behaviour. We have been tried and tempted by the Bostonians; but we have loved our father, and our hatchets have been sharpened upon our affections. In proof of the sincerity of our professions, our whole villages, able to go to war, are come forth. The old and infirm, our infants and squaws, alone remain at home. With one common assent we promise a constant obedience to all you may order; and may the Father of days give you *many, and success!*"

This brief address was received on our parts with ex-

pressions of satisfaction, by the Indians with a m
mer of approval; after which the congress, as it w
called, breaking up, we returned, as we had come forth,
the camp.

CHAPTER II.

NOTHING particularly worthy of being mentioned
curred from this date, up to the arrival of the last day
June. It is true that on the morning after the palaver,
whole army, with its Indian allies, moved forward; but
movement carried us no further than the Crown Po
about thirty miles in advance of the Bouquet, and
that distance from Ticonderoga. Here the tents w
again pitched; and here, for something more than a w
we enjoyed as much of relaxation and social amusem
as men in our circumstances could desire. I say so
amusement, for seldom has an army, in progress tow
the heart of an enemy's country, marched, as we marc
on that occasion. Among our camp-followers were la
of all ranks and descriptions, the wives of generals
officers in command of regiments, as well as of subalt
and privates, who, being abundantly supplied with
means of conveyance, travelled with their children, serva
and household stuff, in their train. The consequence
that but a short space apart from the tents of the r
stood the marquees of the Baroness Reidesdel, the I
Harriet Ackland, with many others, who made it t
business to receive, as often as circumstances would al
crowds of visiters to their evening parties.

It was not, however, in such occupations as these,
General Burgoyne expended the whole of these eight d
He carefully matured his plans, established depots
magazines, reviewed his army, and distributed it as foll
—*The entire* force, numbering, as I have already sta
something more than seven thousand men, was divided

five corps or columns, one of which received the appellation of the advance, another of the reserve, and the remaining three of brigades. The advance, to which our company was attached, consisted of the British light infantry and grenadiers, the 24th regiment, the Indians, placed particularly under Captain Fraser's orders, a body of Canadians, and ten pieces of light cannon. It was led by Brigadier-general Fraser, an officer of great promise and high character, and mustered in all about fifteen hundred men. The reserve, under Lieutenant-colonel Breyman, was composed of Germans, namely, of the Brunswick Chasseurs, a remarkably fine battalion, and the grenadiers and light companies of the other regiments. Of the composition of the three brigades it is not necessary that I should say more, than that two of them were made up of British, one of German troops, and that they were severally commanded by Major-general Philips, Brigadier-general Hamilton, and Major-general Reidesdel. The latter had under his orders a regiment of German dragoons; but they were not mounted, there being at this time barely horses enough in camp to supply the wants of the ladies, the general and staff officers, and to drag a slender portion of our somewhat cumbrous and overgrown artillery.

It was on a beautiful morning, the last in the month of June, that the advance, after standing the customary time under arms, began its march. As we were now in the immediate vicinity of the enemy, and knew not how soon his outposts might be fallen in with, our progress this day was at once more circumspect, and more interesting, than any which we had yet made. The Indians, supported by the marksmen, formed the advanced patrols, and spread themselves in a disorderly but efficient manner, over the front and flank of the column. They were armed with rifles, knives, and tomahawks, and being in their war-paint, presented an appearance which, to the eye of one unaccustomed to such spectacles, must have been extremely imposing.

We, again, sending out a few files to communicate with them, and prevent the possibility of a surprise, advanced in compact body, about two hundred yards in their rear.

Another interval, similar to that which separated the marksmen from the Indians, now occurred, after which came the head of the light brigade, its guns being in the centre, between the grenadiers and light companies, and the 24th regiment. Then followed the heavy brigades in their respective orders; and the whole was covered in rear by scattered parties, similar to those which protected it in front.

Our march, though silent, proved upon the whole an extremely interesting and agreeable one. In the first place, the face of the country became at every step more and more striking, the hills assuming a rougher and bolder outline, and the wood becoming more broken and irregular; whilst the lake, along the margin of which our column moved, seemed alive with the galleys and small frigates of which our fleet was composed. In the next place, the thought of what might be impending—the expectation of meeting at every pass an armed force prepared to defend it—caused us to look with more than ordinary interest upon surrounding objects; whilst an occasional whoop, sometimes a straggling shot, sounding through the woods, kept up to its highest pitch the anxiety of those who heard it.

All these combinations of sight and sound struck forcibly upon the imaginations of men to whom such things were new; nor was their power diminished when an aide-de-camp, riding up, gave directions for the leading files to turn to the right, and prepare for immediate action. There was an excitement in the very word which caused the blood to rush back to its fountain, and the colour to forsake the cheeks even of the bravest for a moment; but it was destined to lead to nothing. The detachment which we expected to engage, fell back as soon as our Indians showed themselves, and that night we bivouacked in quiet at Three Mile Point.

Ticonderoga, the place against which our first operations were directed, stands upon a peninsula or point of land, which is washed on one side by Lake Champlain, on another by Lake George, and on a third by the confluence of the latter lake with the South river. The front of this position, as then occupied by the enemy, lay between

Lakes George and Champlain, bending round in a sort of semicircle; the whole of which was covered with redoubts, batteries, traverses, and abattis: its left was appuyed by three block-houses, and some fortified mills; its right by two block-houses and a battery, which looked towards Lake Champlain. Across the lake, and communicating by means of a flying bridge with the main position, stood Mount Independence, its summit strongly fortified, and well supplied with artillery; whilst along its base ran rows of abattis, with here and there a flêche, and breastwork for infantry. To protect the bridge, again, the Rebels had constructed a boom, composed of large pieces of timber well secured together, and riveted with bolts of iron; and the boom was in its turn covered by a massive double iron chain. On the whole, the post was at once a vitally important and exceedingly formidable one; and as it was understood to be well manned, and amply supplied with all manner of stores and provisions, there were few amongst us who anticipated any other result than a protracted and desperate resistance.

With such a prospect before us, it is scarcely necessary to say, that the night of the 1st of July was, to many, one of the deepest interest and most intense anxiety. We had halted, just before dark, on an eminence barely three miles from the enemy's position; and the blaze of their fires became, as night drew on, distinctly visible. We saw them stretching far and wide in long and formidable array; now shining clear and bright on the brow of a bare hill,—now sending up a dark red mass of vapour from among trees and underwood in the hollows; whilst from time to time their brilliancy would disappear, as heaps of fuel were thrown on, only that it might burst forth again with increased splendour.

Nor was the spectacle embraced by a glance in the opposite direction less striking or less warlike. There lay our own army in two magnificent lines, part occupying this side, part the opposite side of the lake; whilst the Royal George and Inflexible frigates, with a squadron of gun-boats and luggers, kept up the communication; and the very extent of these seemed to convey an assurance that

we exceeded the enemy in numbers, no less than we kn
that we surpassed them in the quality and constitution
our troops.

I need not describe to men who have breathed the atm
sphere of a bivouac, the effect which these sights produc
Even upon Fraser, cool and deliberative as he was, t
were not without their influence. They stirred up in l
numerous warlike associations, bringing the events of o
days vividly to his remembrance; and never had st
teller a more willing auditor than I proved when he be
their recital.

It was still dark, when a general stir among the tr
put an end to the slumbers to which I had at last r
tantly yielded. I started up, and found that our p
were already forming; though whether as a mere measu
precaution, or as a preparation for an attack, no one
peared to know. Like the rest, I seized my arms,
hurried to my post; but hour after hour stole on, wi
bringing matters to an issue, and when day had
dawned, we were still stationary.

At last an order arrived for the men to pile their a
and prepare breakfast; and it was surmised at once,
on this day, at least, no attempt would be made upor
enemy's intrenchments.

That meal was barely finished, and Fraser and m
were preparing to pass the day as men are accustom
spend their time in camp during a season of temp
rest, when a dense smoke, suddenly rising from the l
the enemy's position, arrested our attention. An a
spread that the Rebels were moving, and the bugles s
ing to arms, the troops were accoutred and in ord
march in five minutes. By and by, an Indian was se
full speed hastening from the outposts, who paused or
ascertain where General Burgoyne was to be found,
then hurried on, without so much as dropping a hint t
ing the cause of his abrupt arrival.

The Indian had not passed ten minutes, when an
de-camp made his appearance on the ground, with c
for Fraser's Marksmen and the Red Warriors to
briskly to the left, and the rest of the brigade to a

t the same moment more slowly and steadily to the front· The rebels, it appeared, having set fire to their block-house and abandoned the saw-mills, were concentrating upon their main position; to prevent which, by cutting off the corps in retrogression, was the design of our present movement.

Not a moment was lost in carrying these orders into execution. Whilst the main body, in compact and imposing array, took the road to Mount Hope, the marksmen with their savage allies filed to the left, and were soon concealed from the observation of both friends and foes, in a deep forest. But we were guided by a savage to whom every foot of ground in this country was familiar. He led us through a winding glen round the base of the very hill from which the enemy's column was ascertained to be descending, and brought us to a point of all others the best suited for the particular object which we desired to attain. It was a thick copse skirting the open path which communicated between the saw-mills and the lines, and by which the garrison of the former must of necessity pass, in order to effect a junction with their comrades.

We lay here perhaps a quarter of an hour, when the scouts who had been extended to the right, in order to give notice of the enemy's movements, came in with the intelligence that they were approaching. Every man was instantly on the *qui vive*, and with the exception of a ticking of gunlocks, not a sound could be heard from one flank of the ambuscade to the other. We now listened, with what feelings I leave you to judge, for the tread of feet; nor did any great space of time elapse ere it became audible. It was easily ascertained, likewise, from the cadence of the march, that a considerable body of men were near us, and that they were pursuing their journey, rapidly indeed, but apparently in little order, and altogether unsuspicious of danger.

All this was as it was desired to be. The great end to be obtained by us, was to permit the enemy's line of march to come so completely in contact with us, that every shot thrown in upon their flank would tell; and had this been done, there is little probability that a man of the detached

corps would have escaped. But, strange to say, the Indians, on all other occasions so noted for patience, ruined all by precipitancy. The head of the enemy's column was yet a full hundred yards from our ambuscade, when several of the Red Warriors fired. Their example was instantly followed by the whole body, who threw away their ammunition for no purpose, and then springing forward with hideous yells, rushed hatchet in hand towards the rebels. The latter, who had halted and begun to form, as soon as the first shots alarmed them, now broke and fled in all directions; and though we, as well as the Indians, pursued with all our might, they easily contrived to outstrip us. Scarcely a dozen men fell under the scattering fire which was kept up upon them; and the remainder escaped, by twos and threes, within their lines.

Nothing could exceed the chagrin and mortification experienced by our gallant leader on this occasion,—a feeling in which his company, one and all, deeply shared. Our plans had been digested with so much care, and matters had, up to the last moment, proceeded so happily, that we laid our account with a victory, not more easy of attainment, than important in its results. Our disappointment was, in consequence, the greater, when the miserable issue became certain; nor was it possible to hinder the men from expressing themselves in terms which were far from proving satisfactory to the haughty savages. From that time, it may be said that all cordiality between us and the Indians ceased. The latter followed us, indeed, in the hope of plunder, and because they regarded us as the more powerful of the belligerent parties; but they were no longer allies on whom it would have been prudent to depend in case of any serious difficulties or reverses. Nevertheless, the reconnoissance, generally, was not without its advantages. Fraser's and Philips's corps possessed themselves of Mount Hope, a point from which a commanding view could be obtained over the whole chain of the enemy's works; and here we passed the night, as we had done the preceding, in *bivouac* round our fires.

Little occurred during the two following days worthy of *particular notice.* The enemy having turned a battery

ɔes towards the ground of our encampment, kept up
ess cannonade, from which no loss, and very little
ess was experienced; whilst on our part the greatest
ıs were made to bring up guns, stores, baggage, and
ns. But with the exception of a trifling skirmish or
no moment at the outposts, all remained, as far as we
ncerned, profoundly quiet. But decisive measures
vertheless in progress, and steps were quietly but
aken to render the lines of Ticonderoga untenable.
ıe south side of the communication between Lakes
and Champlain, stands a bold and rocky mountain,
flount Defiance, which completely commands and
ɛs both the Fort of Ticonderoga, and the line of
ments which leant upon it. How the enemy came
ct this height I know not, unless indeed the abrupt-
its ascent led them to suppose that it would be
icable to drag cannon to its summit, and hence that
pation by us would either not be attempted, or if
ed would produce no useful consequences. If such
ly their expectation, nothing could be more ground-
r the hill being seized in the night by a party of
fantry, long before dawn some pieces of heavy
were at its base, and the most active preparations
mediately made for transporting them, with a due
of ammunition, to the summit. But for the latter
ın there was no need. The enemy no sooner ob-
hat we had established a post there, than the perils
situation became manifest to them, and their future
s were directed exclusively to secure a speedy and
eat.

ıe night of the 5th of July, it fell to the lot of
marksmen to put in charge of a picket. The
ty of our post, which lay about halfway down the
nd on that side of the hill which commands a view
nderoga, enabled us to ascertain with perfect ac-
ıll that was passing within the lines. Not a move-
as made, nor a word spoken, which our advanced
failed to detect; and as we had been particularly
d to keep our senses fully on the alert, there was
f attention on the part either of men or officers.

For some hours after sunset all things went on as
had been in the habit of proceeding during many even
before. The American videttes took their customary
tions upon the rampart, and a patrol, pushed out from
to time, felt its way, as it had previously done, as fa
the challenge of our people permitted. In like manne
stole forward at intervals, so as to look down into
ditch; and except when an occasional shot told that
or the other of these reconnoitring parties had been
covered, nothing took place calculated to draw our thou
out of their ordinary channel. But things were des
not to continue thus for ever. Midnight must have
close at hand when a change took place in the ord
affairs; and our viligance, which had begun in som
gree to relax, was again called into full exercise.

The moon, which during the earlier part of the
shed a feeble glimmer abroad, sank beneath the hor
and its setting was followed by an exceedingly thick
ness. No stars could be distinguished, for there w
sort of fog hanging in the atmosphere which compl
shrouded them, though it gave no indication of rai
stormy weather: when there arose all at once from
interior of the fort and lines a clamour of voices, as if t
sands of persons were anxious to give, and none wi
to receive instructions. This was followed by a su
smothering up of the fires, which had hitherto smoul
redly and gloomily, and then the confused tread of
like that of men hurrying to and fro in confusion, be
distinctly audible. As we were fully aware of the
importance of Mount Defiance, as well to the enemy as
selves, the idea naturally occurred, that a sortie was abo
be made; and we stood to our arms in firm expectation
in a few moments more we should be engaged. But a
listening with intense anxiety a full hour, during which
not a shot nor challenge gave warning of advancing colu
that suspicion gradually yielded to another, and we b
to calculate upon the very manœuvre which General St.
was performing. Information was accordingly sen
General Fraser's head-quarters, and we held ourselv
readiness to act in any manner which he might point

Whilst the rest of the company remained in an attitude of defence, I took with me a single trusty companion, and stole forward with the view of penetrating, if possible, within the rebel works, and of ascertaining by personal observation the object of this commotion. The darkness favoured us greatly, and we found, on reaching the crest of the glacis, that the sentinels, more attentive to what was passing among their friends than their enemies, paid no heed whatever to us or our movements. We accordingly descended, unnoticed, into the ditch, and, turning to the right, groped our way along, till a palisade friezed at the top arrested us. With some difficulty we scrambled over it; after which we found ourselves in a covered way leading from one of the more advanced works into the body of the place, and beheld a large portion of the American army formed beside their fires at the distance of some twenty or thirty paces from the spot where we were standing. Fortunately for us, these men were too busy to overhear the noise which we had made in passing the palisade; and though the light of their fires rendered them visible to us, we, who kept in the shade, remained concealed. We instantly crouched down upon our bellies, and creeping close to the parapet, lay at length under its shadow, where we could overhear distinctly every word that was spoken, and yet ran little risk of detection.

A few minutes sufficed to complete what now proved to be the preparatory arrangement of the parade,—when a mounted officer giving the word "March," the enemy's column advanced, to our great horror, along the covered way. They moved, however, in the strictest order, and in profound silence, no man, apparently, looking either to his right or left; and two entire battalions filed past, within three feet of us, without discovering that we were there. How my comrade felt during this tremendous interval I know not; but I confess that with me physical alarm far outweighed every other emotion, and that I did not even attempt to ascertain the numbers or quality of the troops which passed me thus closely. On the contrary, I lay flat upon my face, keeping my mouth close to the ground, lest my breathing, or the violent beating of my heart should

betray me; nor was it until the receding noise of foo assured me of danger past, that I took courage to round. That glance, however, proved abundantly sat tory. It informed me that the rebels were gone, th fort and lines were entirely evacuated, and that the e from whom we anticipated a resistance so desperate, in full retreat. With feelings of the liveliest satisf we hastened back to our post, in order to report thi unlooked-for event to our commander; and in two after, the whole British army was roused, and a vig pursuit begun.

CHAPTER III.

General Burgoyne, who had passed the night on one of the frigates, was no sooner informed of the en flight, than he made dispositions to follow them up wi greatest vigour. The fleet immediately weighed a and bearing down with irresistible impetuosity upo boom, destroyed, in the course of two hours, a b which it had occupied almost as many weeks to cons This done, and a considerable body of troops embark sail was set in pursuit of the American flotilla, of v long before evening, our brave seamen gave, to use own phraseology, an excellent account. They ove their opponents moored, and perfectly ignorant of danger, beside the wharf at Skeensborough; and t they failed in making many prisoners, every galley bateau was either captured or destroyed.

In the mean while our brigade, followed, at an in somewhat too great, by that of General Reidesdel, c Lake Champlain, and commenced a rapid pursuit aft enemy's land column, which was ascertained to have back on the road to Hubberton. No great while el ere the Marksmen and Indians, of whom the adv *guard was composed*, overtook the rear of the flying e *when a broken* and desultory, but not very dest

skirmish began. But though interesting enough to witness, the skirmish led to no important results; for the country was thick and encumbered, the enemy quick in their movements, and our people, worn out with a night of watching, began before long to exhibit symptoms of fatigue. Besides, we were far ahead of all support, even the rest of the brigade being many miles behind us; and hence, whatever advantages we might happen to obtain, could not for want of physical force, be turned to account. Our leader, under these circumstances, determined, after driving in the rear of the Americans upon their main body, to halt; and this he accordingly did in a grove not far from Castletown; where our people, after refreshing themselves from the contents of their havresacks, lay down, and slept soundly for about two hours.

Whilst we were thus employed, General Reidesdel, with his brigade, came up, and a sort of council of war was immediately held between him and our brigadier. The latter, having ascertained that the enemy's rear-guard was in force, and that it lay considerably apart from the main body, being only three leagues ahead of our present position, suggested the possibility of cutting it off; and proposed for that purpose to resume his march, so that he might pass the night in the immediate presence of the Americans. By this means he hoped to take them by surprise on the first return of light; and he entertained no doubt, in case this could be done, of obtaining an easy victory.

General Reidesdel, though naturally cautious, offered no objection to the measure; our people were accordingly roused about an hour before sunset, and we once more advanced with great caution and in good order. Every thing was conducted with the happiest success. No scouts or flying parties met us, and we bivouacked that night within three miles of the American pickets, which entertained not the slightest suspicion that we had passed Castletown. I need not add, that strenuous exertions were used to hinder the intelligence of our approach from reaching them. No fires were lighted, nor did any man dream of wandering beyond the ground of the bivouac; indeed, the sentries received

strict orders not to permit any individual, no matter what his rank or occupation might be, to pass their chain either to the front or rear.

It was yet perfectly dark, when the word to rise and fall in, passed quietly from man to man, put an end to our repose. It was obeyed in profound silence: and in silence equally profound, our little column pushed forward. We followed a sort of rude path through the heart of a forest, which seemed to have been lately cut, and led to the point where the roads from Skeensborough to Hubberton and Charlestown in the New Hampshire Grants diverge. It was here that we came in sight of the American outposts. They occupied the ridge of a steep hill, sending down their sentries almost to its base; and though it was very evident, from the bustle which pervaded them, that our arrival had not been anticipated, they nevertheless stood to their arms like men, and made ready to receive us.

To dislodge them from the high ground, and take possession of it ourselves, was the work of a moment. Not a shot, indeed, was fired on our side, in bringing this about; nor did the enemy pause for more than a single discharge, when, setting the orders and remonstrances of their officers at defiance, they broke, and fled with precipitation down the opposite slope. There they joined the main body, which, we were given to understand, fell not short of fifteen hundred men; and which, under the orders of a gallant soldier, Colonel Francis, was already in order either to receive or give an attack.

For a moment or two after our little column crowned the ridge, there was a short pause, during which the hostile leaders mutually reconnoitred the force and dispositions of the enemy. It was sufficient to satisfy both of the steps which it behoved them to follow, and it was not needlessly protracted. There was a commanding hill on the left, which to both parties presented peculiar advantages, and General Fraser instantly resolved to occupy it. For this purpose, Fraser's marksmen were directed to move off in double-quick time; but we were yet halfway from the *summit, when* an American detachment showed itself pushing for the same point, and ascending by one side as we

mounted the other, the enemy crowned the hill before us; and saluting us, as we drew near, with a sharp volley, seemed resolute to maintain it. But their resolution soon gave way. Raising a cheer, we rushed forward, firing in files as we proceeded; upon which the enemy first wavered, then fell back, and finally fled in confusion. We gave them no time to rally; but, rushing down the declivity in pursuit, found ourselves in a few moments warmly engaged with a force which at the most moderate calculation, doubled us in numbers.

The Americans felt their superiority, and being well led on by a very brave soldier, they stood their ground nobly. Declining a little to their right, they soon outflanked us, and poured in so heavy a fire from behind certain logs and fallen trees, that the Indians gave way, and we ourselves were compelled, after losing several of our comrades, to yield ground. But at this moment, two companies of grenadiers scrambling up the steep face of Mount Pitsford, unexpectedly showed themselves upon our left, when the enemy were again checked, again wavered, and appeared on the point of giving way. Colonel Francis, however, was too well aware of the importance of this height, lightly to abandon it. He brought up fresh troops, giving them courage and confidence by his example; and, rallying the fugitives round him, renewed the contest with obstinate valour.

The firing now extended on both sides from right to left of the line, both parties fighting, as the nature of the country required, *à la tirailleur;* but there was this marked difference between them, that the American skirmishers were animated by seeing their support at hand, whereas we were far in advance of ours, and knew not when it might arrive. Happily, however, it was not very distant. General Reidesdel had heard the firing, and pressed on with the head of his column: and he brought up about two hundred men at a moment when they were sorely needed. These no sooner showed themselves than a panic seized the Americans, who broke and fled in all directions.

Nothing could exceed the gallantry of Colonel Francis at

this juncture. He rode from rank to rank, and from to man, seizing some by the collar, striking others wit flat of his sword, and cheering, and doing his utmc arrest the flight; nor was it by any means impossible, sidering the great superiority of the enemy's numbers, even then his efforts might have ensured the victory. just as he had succeeded in rallying a few companies was advancing boldly at their head, a bullet struck h the throat, and he fell lifeless from his horse. The scarcely paused to look upon him as he lay. The in a body like sheep when faced by a strange dog diving in the recesses of the forest, were soon beyon reach of any other than a scattered and disorderly purs

Our loss in this affair was not great, and the facilit which a half-brigade, mustering in all no more than hundred and fifty men, had driven a very superior from a position of great strength and difficulty, serve a little to increase the confidence which all of us experi both in ourselves and our leaders. We assembled upc field in that state of excitement, which invariably men after an affair in which they have been victorious prepared to push forward whithersoever the general direct; but the last glimmer of light having alreac pired, and the troops suffering severely from fatigu inanition, it was not judged prudent to advance far b the ground which we had won.

Long before dawn on the morning of the 8th, ou column was again under arms; and having waitec till there was light enough to guide our steps, the ma the direction of Skeensborough was resumed. Thi certainly not one of the many pleasant days which been my good fortune to pass in the service. Wh first fell in, the heavens were black with clouds; ar movement had scarcely commenced, ere the rain be descend with a degree of violence, such as in Engla least, cannot be conceived. It was not so much a sl as a sheet of water, which came as if a river had diverted from its course, and was falling over some l bank; insomuch that in five minutes there was not in the whole corps whose garments were not tho

saturated. Nevertheless we pushed on, if not with our usual cheerfulness, at all events without repining, and came in without the occurrence of a single adventure, soon after noon, to Skeensborough. It was a large and thriving village, well situated at the extremity of Lake Champlain, at the head of Wood Creek, and near the confluence of the South and East Rivers; and could boast even then of a tolerable wharf, beside which was moored the whole of our flotilla, whilst the head-quarters of the army were established in the town itself.

I need scarcely add, that we found all classes of persons here in the highest imaginable spirits. The fleet and army, though acting independently of one another—the latter, indeed, in numerous petty detachments, and as it were in detail—had proved victorious every where; and of the good effects of victory at the outset of a campaign, every one acquainted with such matters must be aware. There was not a man attached to the expedition who appeared to doubt as to its ultimate success, or desired any thing further than permission to press forward without a moment's delay. Unfortunately, however, the general saw or imagined obstacles capable of hindering the immediate indulgence of that gallant longing. The detached parties being called in, a second review took place, after which we were formally placed in position; and from that hour our privations, as well as evil fortune, may be said to have had their commencement.

By this new arrangement the main body of the army found itself placed in line along the heights of Skeensborough, with its left upon Wood Creek, and its right on a rugged mountain. To protect it from any thing like surprise, as well as to secure water carriage in all directions, flying corps were at the same time established at various points,—one upon the Castletown road, another upon the roads to Putney and Rutland, and a third in communication between East River and Castletown. This done, strong working parties were sent out day after day, for the purpose of removing such obstacles as the enemy had thrown in the way of our further progress.

I need scarcely remind you, that forty years ago British

armies moved more according to rule than they do at present, and that the possibility of undertaking any thing until magazines had been established, was rarely, if ever admitted. In the true spirit of these tactics, it was no sooner discovered that the enemy, by sinking stones and logs of wood in the channel of Wood Creek, had rendered the navigation difficult, except in the lightest bateaux, than the whole army was employed in weighing them; and as we were miserably supplied with the implements necessary for such operations, our progress was at once slow and very painful. Then again, though the greater portion of the summer was yet before us, and the country abounded with wood and other natural cover, it was deemed totally irregular to move without tents; and as these had all been left behind at Ticonderoga, much precious time was expended in bringing them up. The consequence of all this was, first, that the enemy were enabled to collect their scattered columns, to cut up the roads in our front, and mature their plans for defence; and secondly, that the ardour of our own people, which, had proper advantage been taken of it, would have overcome all difficulties, was allowed to evaporate. Though we reached Skeensborough on the 9th, the end of June was at hand ere we quitted it, and the 30th found us only at Fort Edward: twenty days having been expended in travelling twenty miles of road, which the labour of our own hands had constructed.

It is not worth while to offer any lengthened detail of our proceedings for some time after we had reached that fort. They resembled in most particulars those which marked our previous progress; for the enemy having retreated to Saratoga, on the other side of the river, the faint hope which had been nourished of bringing them to action disappeared. Let it suffice to pronounce these melancholy words—We halted. True, our provisions were short,—how could they be otherwise, with an army which marched at the rate of only one mile per day?—and our chief could not go on till he had collected supplies sufficient to ensure him against all risk of starving. But the halt *was the* reverse of a season of rest to the unfortunate troops, *who were* more than ever oppressed in bringing up stores,

which, had common diligence been used, would not have been needed. Not a day passed which saw not whole brigades executing the offices of baggage animals, carrying by manual labour stores which were consumed as fast as brought up, and wasting their strength for no purpose.

Let me now state to you more fully than I have yet done, the general plan of the campaign in which we were now embarked. The great object which General Burgoyne sought to obtain was to force his way down the course of the Hudson, and rallying round him, as he proceeded, as many loyalists as chose to follow his fortunes, to effect a junction with the army of General Howe, then blockaded in New York. To facilitate this measure, by distracting the attention of the enemy, a smaller expedition, under the orders of Colonel St. Leger, had been organized, which, moving through the western part of Chester county, threatened Fort Stanwix, a rudely fortified station upon the Mohawks.

Colonel St. Leger's force was extremely weak, particularly in troops of the line,—of which no more than four hundred, and those composed of detachments from different regiments, served under him; and the whole including Provincials, Canadians, and some hundreds of Indians, barely amounted up to twelve hundred men. He pushed forward, however, with great diligence, and on the 3d of August invested the fortress, sending intelligence at the same time to the general in chief of his situation; and in two days afterwards he had the good fortune to surprise and cut to pieces a body of eight hundred Americans, when on their march to relieve the garrison.

So far all things had succeeded according to our wish; but Colonel St. Leger gradually found, that in the expectations which he had been led to form respecting the loyalty of the inhabitants of the invaded district, the grossest impositions had been practised on him. Instead of crowds of volunteers, scarcely an individual came to his camp; and of the few who did come, it was more than suspected that by far the *greater proportion* came with a treacherous *intention.*

That these advantages, trifling as they were, might not

be wholly wasted, it became incumbent on General Burgoyne to advance without delay,—whilst the deplorable deficiency in the means of transport under which he laboured seemed to render all attempts at moving the army fruitless.

I have said that the American army retreated as we advanced, cutting up the roads, and devastating the face of the country over which they passed. They were now, according to the best accounts which we could receive, at Saratoga, a hamlet, or rather farm, on the bank of the Hudson, and about halfway between Fort Edward and the Mohawks. It seemed advisable to General Burgoyne to threaten them there: for if they risked an action, he had no apprehensions as to the result; if they retired, Colonel St. Leger would be in their rear; and should they succeed in escaping both divisions, then was the road to Albany thrown open, and the principal design of the inroad attained. Increased exertions were accordingly used to bring a flotilla from the lakes to the nearest navigable point in the river; and so unremitting were they, that before the close of the first week in August, a considerable number of boats and barges, laden with such stores as could be forwarded, were launched upon the stream, and ready to accompany the army.

Whilst these projects were in contemplation, and the above means adopted for bringing them to an issue, a piece of information was obtained at head-quarters, which promised to bring about the happiest results, by relieving us at once from all the embarrassments attendant upon meager supplies and inadequate means of transport. About twenty miles to the eastward of the Hudson lies the obscure village of Bennington,—a cluster of poor cottages, situated in a wild country, between the forks of the Hossac. Here the enemy had gathered together a considerable depot of cattle, corn, horses, and wheel carriages, most of which were drawn across the Connecticut river from the provinces of New England; and as it was understood to be guarded by a party of militia only, an attempt to surprise it seemed by no means unjustifiable. It is true that between Fort Edward and Bennington, the

means of communication were exceedingly defective. One prodigious forest, bottomed in swamps and morasses, covered the whole face of the country; through which no body of men, unless familiarly accustomed to such expeditions, could hope to make their way, at all events with celerity. But the necessities of the army were pressing; the state of the campaign was a critical one; and the risk, though doubtless great, was considered by no means to outweigh the advantages to be derived from success. General Burgoyne determined to incur it; and a few hours sufficed for the final arrangement of his plan, and drawing up his instructions.

There were attached to our little army two hundred German dragoons; men of tried valour and enterprise, but destitute of horses. These the general selected as part of the force to be employed in the surprise of Bennington; not only because he entertained the most perfect confidence in their steadiness, but because he conceived that in the country into which they were about to penetrate, they might be able to pick up a sufficient number of horses for their own use. In addition to these, the Canadian Rangers, a detachment of Provincials, about one hundred Indians, and Captain Fraser's marksmen, with two pieces of light cannon, were placed under the orders of Lieutenant-colonel Baume, who received special instructions to proceed with extreme caution.

CHAPTER IV.

THOUGH all the arrangements were completed, and the troops destined to fulfil them were told off so early as the beginning of August, the middle of the month was approaching ere this attempt, on the success of which so much was supposed to depend, was made. Often was a toilsome and tedious march a little, and but a little enlivened, by a harmless skirmish, which some straggling rebels chose to maintain with our detached Indians. Our

army at length reached its destined resting-place, an
up a position on the eastern bank of the Hudson,
diately opposite to the heights of Saratoga.

This done, and the enemy having withdrawn as
Still Water, the general proceeded to carry into exe
his projected design against Bennington. At an
hour in the morning of the 12th, our little band, une
bered with any quantity of baggage besides that
each man could conveniently carry upon his back,
in the direction of Batten Kill, where it arrived, v
meeting with any adventure, by four o'clock in the
noon. Here we halted for the night, by which m
company of fifty chasseurs overtook us, whom C
Burgoyne, distrustful of our strength, sent to reinfo
but at five next morning we were again in motio
pushed cautiously, though with a quick pace, in the
tion of Cambridge.

Our journey this day proved in many respect
interesting than any which we had performed sin
pursuit from Ticonderoga. The country, as we ad
exhibited greater signs of cultivation, a field
interposing here and there amidst the savannal
a few detached cottages lying by the wayside;
several of the country people voluntarily joined
took the oath of allegiance to the king. From th
learned that a company of rebels had been left in
bridge, as a guard over some cattle which were
way to Bennington; and as it was deemed of imp
to seize such wherever they could be found, our scou
commanded to quicken their pace, and surprise the

I was not one of the party thus sent forward, th
having been intrusted to thirty provincials and fifty I
but the latter attained their object after a trifling sk
in which one man only was wounded. Nothing c
finer than the effect produced by the desultory firing
was kept up on that occasion by the retreating ene
our pursuers. It so happened that the point whe
first met, though covered with a deep and extensive
was not encumbered by brushwood or other deafen
stances; and hence each report, as it rolled fro

tree and glade to glade, sounded as if not one, but fifty muskets had been fired. You will easily believe that the first discharge caused us to quicken our pace, and to recover our ranks, which had begun to straggle; but no opportunity was afforded us of joining. The enemy fought only to escape; and hence, when we reached Cambridge, we found it in full occupation of our advance, which had made prizes of no inconsiderable quantity of carts and waggons, as well as of cattle and horses.

The satisfaction arising from this first success was not, however, so great as to render us indifferent to the nature of the intelligence which met us there. Instead of four or five hundred men, it was accurately ascertained that not fewer than eighteen hundred were in Bennington; and though some appeared to be of opinion that they would not wait to receive us, there were others who scrupled not to foretel a widely different result. Now, in spite of our late reinforcement, our whole strength fell considerably short of six hundred men; and of these a full hundred were Indians, on whom no great reliance could be placed. Still, Colonel Baume appeared to consider his situation secure. He spoke, as far as we could understand him, in very contemptuous terms of the rebels, and busily employed himself in receiving the submission of the inhabitants, who in great numbers flocked to his standard. Unfortunately, Colonel Baume forgot the cautions which had been so strongly impressed upon him. He considered all persons sincere who professed attachment to the royal cause; alluding in their presence, and without reserve, to his own numbers and designs; and as by far the greater portion were in reality traitors, every circumstance connected with our dispositions and plans became as well known to the enemy as to ourselves.

It was our leader's intention to march at once upon Bennington; for which purpose his little corps was under arms and in column, long before sunrise on the 14th. For some time our progress was, as it had hitherto been, unimpeded; but as we approached the northern branch of the Hossac, by the farm and bridge of Sankoick, the arrangements of the enemy began gradually to develop themselves.

A flying party of rebels were discovered in front of the farm, which, on the approach of our people, spread themselves along the underwood; and they were not dislodged till after a good deal of firing, which caused us some loss in several of the most forward among the savages. At last, however, they retreated, abandoning a mill which they had previously fortified, and breaking down the bridge; and long before the latter could be repaired, they were safe from further molestation.

There was a good deal to excite apprehension even in this unimportant rencounter. The rebels, though they gave way at last, fought like men conscious of their own prowess, and confident in the strength of the support which was behind them; and this, coupled with the rumours which had reached us relative to the amount of the garrison of Bennington, failed not to startle both Colonel Baume, and the boldest of his troops. Besides, much time was lost by the destruction of the bridge. It required a full hour so far to repair it as to enable the guns and horses to pass; and when this was done, the day had declined so far as to render any attempt to reach the point of our destination before sunset fruitless. We accordingly bivouacked at the farm of Walmscott, about four miles from Sankoick, and three from Bennington; where the night was spent, if not in a sense of absolute security, at all events without the occurrence of any accident capable of exciting alarm.

The morning of the 15th came in with heavy rains, and a perfect hurricane of wind; consequently the little column, instead of pressing forward was fain to keep under shelter of the farm buildings. But it was not permitted to remain long in a situation so comfortable. Our early parade had just been dismissed, when a few shots in the direction of the advanced sentries gave notice that the rebels, instead of waiting to be attacked, were on the move; and in a few minutes afterwards a general commotion at the outposts, indicated more by the shouts of the Indians than the report of their arms, warned us to make ready for an immediate attack. Colonel Baume lost no time in preparing to *meet it.* Forming his dismounted dragoons in close column *among the* homestead, he directed the provincials, sup

ported by Fraser's marksmen, to advance to the assistance of the pickets, with orders to dispute every inch of ground to the utmost, and finally to retire upon the reserve, should all their efforts to maintain themselves prove ineffectual.

In an instant we were in motion, and a few minutes sufficed to bring us to the scene of action. We found our Indians threatened, rather than seriously assailed, by a considerable body of militia-men, before whom they were falling back, leisurely and in order; but such was the violence of the storm, that not one out of a dozen muskets would explode, and hence the skirmish was neither very animated nor very bloody. On seeing us, our savage allies uttered a yell, which seemed to strike panic into the bosoms of their assailants: for the latter instantly paused, hung back as it were irresolute, and finally retired. We followed for a time, briskly and impetuously; but we likewise felt the bad effects of the weather too much to seek a general engagement; and as the movements of the enemy seemed to indicate a wish on their parts to draw us on, we were of course extremely shy in trusting ourselves beyond our own limits. We accordingly halted as soon as we had recovered the ground which the savages had lost, and, lying down behind the trees, contented ourselves with watching the result during many hours, and striving as well as we could, to keep the priming of our rifles from the rain.

Whether the Americans ever entertained any serious intention of attacking this day, I cannot pretend to determine; but if they did, the state of the weather compelled them to relinquish it. Yet they ventured to advance, from time to time, in considerable numbers, as if resolved to try how far our position was tenable; and on each occasion a little firing took place; but no impression was made upon us, and the rain continuing to fall without intermission, they at last desisted from their efforts, and withdrew. Their proceedings were not, however, of a nature to be disregarded, or held in contempt, by a force so insignificant as ours. Colonel Baume immediately despatched a *messenger to the rear*, for the purpose of bringing up an

additional corps which General Burgoyne had stationed at Batten Kill to support us; whilst he set sedulously to the task of fortifying a position in which he might await the coming up of supplies, of which he began now to be conscious that he stood in need.

The farm of Walmscott lies upon both banks of the Hossac, and consisted at this time of some six or eight log-built huts, scattered here and there over the narrow expanse of cultivated ground. To the left was a height, which Colonel Baume hastened to occupy: he posted here the dragoons with a portion of the marksmen on their right, in rear of a little zigzag breastwork, composed of logs and loose earth. Such of the detached houses as came within the compass of his position, he filled with Canadians, supporting them with detachments of chasseurs and grenadiers, likewise intrenched behind breastworks; and he kept the whole, with the exception of about a hundred men, on the north side of the stream, holding the woods upon his flanks, in his front and rear, by the Indians.

To complete these arrangements, and throw up the few works which were to render them efficient, occupied the entire day, and some portion of the night of the 15th; and seldom have men undergone hardships more severe than our people endured whilst thus employed. Let it be borne in mind, that the 15th was a day of continued rain; no such rain as we are accustomed to witness in this country but an absolute torrent, to afford shelter against which human ingenuity has yet devised no covering. Under this the men toiled on, the earth which they threw up, being repeatedly washed down again, and the holes and ditches which they dug out, filled in a moment, and so rendered worse than useless. But their patience equalled the difficulties which it was called upon to surmount. Each man felt, too, that he was labouring for his own personal safety not less than for the benefit of the whole; and all were, in consequence, inspired with a principle of perfect heroism and self-devotion. Poor fellows! their spirit and perseverance were, on the present occasion, of little avail. The *sufficed, indeed,* to save their possessors from dishonour

and enabled them to sell their lives dearly; but they were quite inadequate to secure victory, or even to ward off defeat.

As soon as darkness fairly set in, our corps, which had hitherto kept its station on the opposite side of the stream, was silently withdrawn, and took ground beside Reidesdel's dragoons on the little hill above alluded to. There we passed the night, not very comfortably, as may be well supposed, seeing that no fires were lighted, and that we were all impressed with a powerful sense of impending danger. But if there was an absence of mirth, there was no approximation to terror; for we held our own valour at the highest, and rated that of our opponents somewhat too cheaply. Yet there were few amongst us that slept very soundly. We could not but remember that we were cut off, by a wide tract of desolate country, from all communication with our friends, and exposed to attacks on every side from a numerous enemy; and the whoop which the savages raised from time to time, as well as an occasional musket-shot, gave notice, that even now that enemy was not inactive. Our anxiety for the return of day was greater by far than perhaps any of us would have been willing to acknowledge, even to his dearest friend; and the feeling of satisfaction was general, when the gradual reddening of the eastern sky denoted that it was fast approaching.

The morning of the 16th rose beautifully serene. The storm of the preceding day having expended itself, not a cloud was left to darken the face of the heavens; whilst the very leaves hung motionless, and the long grass waved not, under the influence of a perfect calm. Every object around too, appeared to peculiar advantage; for the fields looked green and refreshed, the river was swollen and tumultuous, and the branches were all loaded with dew-drops, which glittered in the sun's early rays like so many diamonds. Nor would it be easy to imagine any scene more rife with peaceful and even pastoral beauty. Looking down from the summit of the rising ground, I beheld immediately beneath me a *wide sweep* of stately forest, interrupted at *remote intervals by* green meadows or yellow corn-fields; *whilst here and there* a cottage, a shed, or some other pri-

mitive edifice, reared its modest head, as if for the purpose of reminding the spectator, that man had begun his inroads upon nature, without as yet taking away from her simplicity and grandeur. I hardly recollect a scene which struck me at the moment more forcibly, or which has left a deeper or more lasting impression on my memory.

All was perfectly quiet at the outposts, not an enemy having been seen, nor an alarming sound heard, for several hours previous to sunrise. So peaceable, indeed, was the aspect which matters bore, that our leaders felt warmly disposed to resume the offensive, without waiting the arrival of the additional corps for which they had applied; and orders were already issued for the men to eat their breakfasts, preparatory to more active operations. But the arms were scarcely piled, and the havresacks unslung, when symptoms of a state of affairs, different from that which had been anticipated, began to show themselves, and our people were recalled to their ranks in all haste, almost as soon as they had quitted them. From more than one quarter scouts came in to report, that columns of armed men were approaching; though whether with a friendly or hostile intention, neither their appearance nor actions enabled our informants to ascertain.

It has been stated, that during the last day's march our little corps was joined by many of the country people; most of whom demanded and obtained arms, as persons friendly to the royal cause. How Colonel Baume became so completely duped as to place reliance on these men, I know not, but having listened with complacency to their previous assurances, that in Bennington a large majority of the populace were our friends, he was somehow or other persuaded to believe, that the armed bands of whose approach he was warned, were loyalists on their way to make a tender of their services to the leader of the king's troops. Filled with this idea he despatched positive orders to the outposts, that no molestation should be offered to the advancing columns; but that the pickets retiring before them should join the main body, where every disposition was *made to receive* either friend or foe.

Unfortunately for us, these orders were but too faithfully

obeyed. About half-past nine o'clock I, who was not in the secret, beheld, to my utter amazement, our advanced parties withdraw without firing a shot, from thickets which might have been maintained for hours against any superiority of numbers; and the same thickets quickly occupied by men, whose whole demeanour, as well as their dress and style of equipment, plainly and incontestably pointed them out as rebels.

I cannot pretend to describe the state of excitation and alarm into which our little band was now thrown. With the solitary exception of our leader, there was not a man amongst us who appeared otherwise than satisfied that those to whom he had listened were traitors; and that unless some prompt and vigorous measures were adopted, their treachery would be crowned with its full reward. Captain Fraser, in particular, seemed strongly imbued with the conviction that we were wilfully deceived. He pointed out in plain language the extreme improbability of the story which these deserters had told, and warmly urged our chief to withdraw his confidence from them. But all his arguments proved fruitless. Colonel Baume remained convinced of their fidelity. He saw no reason to doubt that the people whose approach excited so much apprehension were the same of whose arrival he had been forewarned; and he was prevented from placing himself entirely in their power, only by the positive refusal of his followers to obey orders given to that effect, and by the rash impetuosity of the enemy.

We had stood about half an hour under arms, watching the proceedings of a column of four or five hundred men, who, after dislodging the pickets, had halted just at the edge of the open country, when a sudden trampling of feet in the forest on our right, followed by the report of several muskets, attracted our attention. A patrol was instantly sent in the direction of the sound; but before the party composing it had proceeded many yards from the lines, a loud shout, followed by a rapid, though straggling fire of musketry, warned us to prepare for a meeting the *reverse of friendly.* Instantly the Indians came pouring in, *carrying dismay and* confusion in their countenance and

gestures. We were surrounded on all sides; columns [illegible] advancing everywhere against us, and those whom we [illegible] hitherto treated as friends had only waited till the arrival [illegible] their support might justify them in advancing. There [illegible] no falsehood in these reports, though made by men [illegible] spoke rather from their fears than their knowledge. [illegible] column in our front no sooner heard the shout than they [illegible] replied cordially and loudly to it; then, firing a volley [illegible] deliberate and murderous aim, rushed furiously towards us.

Now then, at length, our leader's dreams of security [illegible] dispelled. He found himself attacked in front and [illegible] by thrice his numbers, who pressed forward with the confidence which our late proceedings were calculated to produce; whilst the very persons in whom he had trusted, [illegible] to whom he had given arms, lost no time in turning [illegible] against him. These miscreants no sooner heard their comrades cry, than they deliberately discharged their muskets among Reidesdel's dragoons; and dispersing before any steps could be taken to seize them, escaped, with the exception of one or two, to their friends.

If Colonel Baume had permitted himself to be duped into a great error, it is no more than justice to confess, that he exerted himself manfully to remedy the evil, and avert its consequences. Our little band, which had hitherto remained in column, was instantly ordered to extend, and the troops lining the breastwork replied to the fire of the rebels with extreme celerity and considerable effect. So close and destructive, indeed, was our first volley, that the assailants recoiled before it, and would have retreated, in all probability, within the wood; but ere we could take advantage of the confusion produced, fresh attacks developed themselves, and we were warmly engaged, on every side and from all quarters. It became evident that each of our detached posts was about to be assailed at the same instant. Not one of our dispositions had been concealed from the enemy, who, on the contrary, seemed to be aware of the exact number of men stationed at each point; and they were one and all threatened by a force perfectly adequate *to bear down* opposition, and yet by no means disproportionably large, or such as to render the main body inefficient.

All, moreover, was done with the sagacity and coolness of veterans, who perfectly understood the nature of the resistance to be expected, and the difficulties to be overcome, and who, having well considered and matured their plans, were resolved to carry them into execution at all hazards, and at every expense of life.

It was at this moment, when the heads of columns began to show themselves in rear of our right and left, that the Indians, who had hitherto acted with spirit, and something like order, lost all confidence, and fled. Alarmed at the prospect of having their retreat cut off, they stole away, after their own fashion, in single files, in spite of the strenuous remonstrances of Baume, and of their own officers, leaving us more than ever exposed, by the abandonment of that angle of the intrenchments which they had been appointed to maintain. But even this spectacle, distressing as it doubtless was, failed in affecting our people with a feeling at all akin to despair. The vacancy which the retreat of the savages occasioned was promptly filled up by one of our two field-pieces, whilst the other poured destruction among the enemy in front, as often as they showed themselves in the open country, or threatened to advance.

In this state things continued upwards of three-quarters of an hour. Though repeatedly assailed in front, flanks, and rear, we maintained ourselves with so much obstinacy, as to inspire a hope that the enemy might even yet be kept at bay till the arrival of Breyman's corps, now momentarily expected; when an accident occurred, which at once put an end to this expectation, and exposed us, almost defenceless, to our fate. The solitary tumbrel which contained the whole of our spare ammunition, became ignited, and blew up with a violence which shook the very ground under our feet, and caused a momentary cessation in firing, both on our side and that of the enemy. But the cessation was only for a moment. The American officers, guessing the extent of our calamity, cheered their men on to fresh exertions; they rushed up the ascent with redoubled ardour, in spite of the heavy volley which we poured in to check them; and find-

ing our guns silent, they sprang over the parapet, and dashed within our works.

For a few seconds the scene which ensued defies the power of language to describe. The bayonet, the butt of the rifle, the sabre, the pike, were in full play; and many fell, as they rarely fall in modern war, under the direct blows of their enemies. But such a struggle could not in the nature of things be of long continuance. Outnumbered, broken, and somewhat disheartened by late events, our people wavered, and fell back, or fought singly and unconnectedly, till they were either cut down at their posts, obstinately defending themselves, or compelled to surrender. Of Reidesdel's dismounted dragoons, few survived to tell how nobly they had behaved; Colonel Baume, shot through the body by a rifle-ball, fell mortally wounded, and all order and discipline being lost, flight, or submission, was alone thought of.

For my own part, whether the feeling arose from desperation or accident I cannot tell, but I resolved not to be taken. As yet I had escaped almost unhurt, a slight flesh-wound in the left arm having alone fallen to my share; and gathering around me about thirty of my comrades, we made a rush where the enemy's ranks appeared weakest, and burst through. This done, each man made haste to shift for himself, without pausing to consider the fate of his neighbour; and losing one third of our number from the enemy's fire, the remainder took refuge, in groups of two or three, within the forest.

CHAPTER V.

It were no easy matter to describe the sensations which take possession of a man who has just escaped from a field of carnage and defeat, and finds himself all at once a fugitive and a wanderer in a country every where hostile to him. *Though* oppressed, and ready to drop to the earth through

hirst and fatigue, I could not pause even to look behind, whilst as yet the shouts of the victors and the tumult of the trife rang in my ears; nor was it till an alarming sense of giddiness warned me to proceed no further, that I at last ventured to cast myself at length under a spreading oak. The giddiness in question, I was not long in discovering, rose from loss of blood. Whilst running down the slope, a ball had passed through my thigh, of which at the moment I was not aware; but several of the smaller arteries having been cut, it bled profusely, and now occasioned so much weakness, that it was with difficulty I succeeded in preserving my consciousness. Happily for me, a stream of pure water flowed from a mossy fountain near, of which I drank the sweetest and most luxurious draught that ever passed my lips: and being refreshed and invigorated by it, I so far recovered self-command, as to look, as well as I could, to the state of my hurt. I wrapped my handkerchief tightly round it, so as to stanch the bleeding, and lay down again, with the design, if possible, of courting sleep.

But though I would have given worlds for one hour of undisturbed slumber, and though the bodily machine felt as if its vigour had departed for ever, sleep refused to come upon me. If I closed my eyes for a moment, it was merely to fall into a feverish doze, during which images the most hideous and alarming crowded my imagination, and from which the slightest waving of the rushes, or the rustling of the long grass, sufficed to rouse me. I started at the sound of my own breathing; and without knowing what it was that I feared, I found myself the slave of the most hideous terror. Nor was it over my mind alone that this nervous irritability exerted its influence. I have often travelled, and travelled on foot too, whilst suffering under wounds more dangerous and troublesome than those which then disabled me; but on that day my limbs refused to do their office, or to carry me one step beyond the spot where I first halted. I accordingly lay for two whole hours in a condition as deplorable as can well be conceived; cut off from all hope or chance of receiving support or assistance from my friends, and anticipating nothing else than either to perish by want,

or to fall a sacrifice to some wandering party of hostile savages.

I was thus situated, having dropped into a sort of trance, such as forms the connecting link between sleep and waking, when a sound which had hitherto smote upon the ear of fancy alone, suddenly arose, and burst in a moment the spell which bound me. It was a roar of musketry, with an occasional boom of cannon, echoed back in tremendous tumult by the surrounding forests; and I was not slow in conjecturing that it arose from Colonel Breyman's party engaged with the same force by which we had just been overthrown. It will readily be imagined that I listened to the awful sound with an intensity of interest such as hardly any other in nature could have produced, and that my hopes and fears obtained by turns the mastery, in proportion as it appeared to approach or recede from the spot where I lay. Now it seemed to draw rapidly towards me, now it swept away in the opposite direction; now I judged that the rebels were falling back, now that the king's troops were retreating, so wavering and uncertain a guide is the ear, unassisted by the operation of other senses.

By degrees, however, matters assumed a more decided character. The firing, which for a time had extended over a considerable space, gradually narrowed, as if the skirmishers were called in, and lines were formed for a charge; and then a shout, of which I well knew the import, rang through the air. It was followed by a momentary silence, more awful by far than the tumult which ushered it in; and then succeeded a tiraillade so warm and so confused, as plainly to indicate that one side or other had given way. It was no longer, now, the steady discharges of hostile armies, each in firm array, and eager for victory; but the desultory firing of detached parties, some in flight, others in hot pursuit. I could bear this state of suspense no longer; so, mustering all my resolution, I struggled to rise, and after several ineffectual attempts, succeeded.

The sun had set, and twilight was closing in fast, when I began my tedious and painful journey towards the open country. My limb, swollen and stiff, refused at first to support the weight of my body; and my whole frame

enfeebled with inanition, no less than by loss of blood, with difficulty obeyed the motions of a mind to which something like its natural tone was restored. I reeled like a drunken man, and felt as if at every step I should have fallen again. But a strong sense of the necessity for exertion kept me up, and as long as the faintest light remained, and the firing continued to direct me, I pushed on. At last, however, the firing ceased entirely, and darkness the deepest and most profound covered the whole face of the sky. Now, then, I gave myself up absolutely to despair, and casting myself once more upon the ground, I shut my eyes, and resigned myself, without a groan, to my fate.

How long I remained in this plight I cannot tell, for either sleep, or, which is more probable, a fainting-fit soon overpowered me; but when I recovered my senses, I found myself in the midst of a group of armed men, one of whom was kindly supporting my head upon his knee. A large fire was blazing near, the light of which fell strongly upon my companions; but so confused were my senses, and so vague and unsatisfactory the workings of memory itself, that I could not tell for many minutes whether I was in the hands of friends or foes. Nay, my situation was to me altogether inexplicable. I recollected something, indeed, of the events of the morning, as that we had sustained a severe action, and that I had myself been alone in the woods; but how I came there, whether we had been defeated or victorious, and above all, why I should be as I now was, were mysteries which all my exertions failed to solve. By degrees, however, reason resumed her influence. I raised my head, and gazing around, began to receive some faint impression that the faces before me were familiar, when a well-known voice restored me at once to myself, and I found that I was really among friends. The voice was that of my brave leader, on whom I was leaning; and to my inexpressible delight I now saw that the group was composed entirely of old comrades—the members of my own corps, Fraser's marksmen.

As soon as the first gush of joy had subsided, I eagerly *inquired of Fraser* by what means he had escaped from the *carnage of yesterday*, and how fortune had so ordered it *to bring him to* my relief. The first portion of his st

resembled my own in almost every particular; the last contained details but little calculated to raise the spirits of one already humbled by defeat, and debilitated by bodily suffering. Like me, he had cut his way through the circle of Americans, but, instead of plunging into the heart of the forest, he contented himself with such shelter as the banks of the river afforded, with the intention of escaping by the main road, as soon as darkness should set in. He was thus situated when Colonel Breyman's detachment arrived at the very ground where ours had sustained its defeat. To this he hastened to attach himself; but before he found an opportunity of making its leader aware of the events which had just occurred, it too was furiously attacked by General Starke. A sanguinary affair soon ensued, in which, for a time, our people appeared to have the advantage; but their ammunition beginning to fail, they were compelled to slacken their fire, and put all upon the hazard of a single charge. The charge was indeed successful,—that is to say, the enemy fled before it, and the field was for a moment won,—but it was only for a moment; for Starke, rallying his people, threw them in small bands round Breyman's flanks, and soon broke, by an incessant fire, ranks which could no longer be maintained except by the bayonet. Finally, the Hessians retreated in disorder, leaving their guns, and many prisoners, in the hands of the victors; and were saved from absolute destruction only by the approach of night.

It was whilst escaping the second time from a contest so disastrous, that chance directed Fraser to the spot where I lay. I had taken, it appeared, the exact route which, had I pursued it a little further, must have brought me to the left of Breyman's line; and when all means of guiding my steps failed, I lay down, happily for myself, upon the very track which most of the fugitives from the battle were compelled to follow. Being discovered here and recognised by my relative, I was conveyed at his request to the spot which we now occupied; where my hurts were carefully *dressed,* and every attention was shown to me by men in *whom personal* suffering had not yet produced its ordinary *effect, of* rendering them callous to the miseries of others.

I would willingly pass over that portion of my history which refers to our painful progress back from the Hossac to the Hudson. Were I, indeed, to enter into the detail of it, my descriptions would be only of sufferings the most acute, arising partly from the absence of common nutriment, and partly from a consciousness of individual degradation, of which none among us could divest ourselves. Of the remains of Breyman's corps, be it observed, we lost sight entirely. It fell back, I believe, in tolerable order by the main road, and not being pursued, regained the banks of the Hudson in safety; but the party to which I found myself attached, had separated from the main body, and of course knew nothing of its fate from the moment when the separation took place. We accordingly kept the woods during three entire days, deriving our subsistence chiefly from wild fruits, and a few crums which remained in our haversacks: and our progress was the more tardy, because I could not move without assistance, and my comrades refused to abandon me. But we gained the camp at last, though in a plight which bore ample testimony to the privations which we had endured; and I became for some time the inhabitant of that most melancholy of all abodes, a military hospital.

My wounds, though originally slight, had become, from neglect and the hardships which I had been condemned to undergo, so inflamed, that several days elapsed ere I was able to pay attention to any circumstance not immediately connected with my own feelings. I lay all this while upon a wretched pallet, in the same room with twelve unfortunate creatures, of whom seven died delirious and raving. Yet so acute were my own agonies, and so overwhelming their influence over me, that I could not experience so much as pity for any one except myself. If my miserable comrades groaned or complained, I answered only with a curse, because they disturbed my meditations or interrupted my repose: so perfectly selfish do men become, when their miseries pass a certain point, or exceed their powers of endurance.

Yet let me do justice to myself. It was only whilst matters *were at the worst* with me, that feelings so unworthy *obtained an ascendancy*, which they gradually lost as my

own case obtained amelioration. The paroxysm was no sooner over, than my past unkindness affected me with deep shame; and I thenceforth exerted myself to the utmost, in order to make amends for it.

In this manner nearly a fortnight was passed; during which time the army remained stationary,—its energies being chiefly devoted to the bringing up of stores from the rear, and the construction of rafts with which to pass the river. Whilst our own people were thus employed, the Indians, spreading themselves over the face of the country, brought havoc and dismay into all districts, and perpetrated enormities at the recollection of which the mind, even at this distance of time, shudders. Irritated by the trifling progress which had been made, and indignant at the check imposed upon plunder, these savages put to death every man, woman, or child that fell into their hands; insomuch that General Burgoyne was driven to the necessity of threatening their very chiefs with punishment, in the event of their failing to restrain the cruelties of their followers. But his threats and entreaties were alike disregarded, enormity after enormity occurring, till at last a deed was perpetrated which will for ever leave an indelible stain upon the honour of the British arms.

About ten miles from the site of our present encampment, and something more from the post of Fort Edward, stood a neat cottage, the residence of an aged and loyal emigrant, by name Macrea. He had served as officer in one of the Highland regiments, in former wars against the French; and having been rewarded at the peace by a grant of land, he changed his sword for a ploughshare, and sat down to cultivate his farm, and train up his children in principles of loyalty and honour. For a time all things went well with him; his labours were crowned with success; under his own exertions and those of his sons, the barren wilderness became a smiling garden, and the old man considered himself, as he was considered by his neighbours, one of the most prosperous individuals in the settlement. To complete his good fortune, a fine young man, the son of an old comrade, and *now a fellow settler*, made proposals for the hand of his daughter; and being equally acceptable to the maid as to her

father, he was duly received in the character of an accepted lover.

Things were in this state, and the wedding-day was understood to be approaching, when the breaking out of the rebellion, with the subsequent operations against Canada, dissipated for a time all thoughts of domestic arrangements. Macrea espoused the cause of his Sovereign warmly; and his sons, as well as his proposed son-in-law, took up arms in the royal service. Of the former, one fell in the affair of Fort St. John, the other during the assault at Quebec; and Macrea became, in consequence, dependent wholly upon his daughter, for that support which his increasing infirmities demanded.

Strange to say, Macrea, though well known as a partisan of the government, suffered neither insult nor molestation from the rebel colonists near him. Allowances seem to have been made for the prejudices of an old soldier; and though he never disguised his wishes as to the final results of the war, he continued on the best terms with men whose principles and feelings all led to an opposite line of conduct. The consequence was, that when Burgoyne's invasion began, though most of his neighbours abandoned their houses, and sought shelter at a distance from our line of march, no one dreamed of offering insult or injury to him, because he adopted a different course of conduct; and he remained, with his daughter, to welcome the coming of men whom his principles taught him to regard as deliverers.

Macrea's farm lay somewhat out of the track of either of our columns in the pursuit from Ticonderoga; consequently it escaped a visit which, if paid in the first moment of angry triumph, might have been far from agreeable. Probably it would have passed unscathed altogether, had our progress been more rapid, or our future successes more brilliant; but the ill-judged halt opposite to Saratoga afforded an opportunity to marauders, of which they failed not to take advantage, and by which the old colonist became a severe sufferer.

A party of Indians stealing from the lines, made their *way to his house.* They burst upon him during the night,

driving the old man into the woods for safety, and wantonly destroying such of his effects as they possessed not the means to remove; and above all, they seized his daughter, of whom, in the confusion, Macrea had for a moment lost sight. Had matters ended here, all might have yet been well; Macrea was not a man to resent even this injury, knowing, as he well knew, the nature of those who inflicted it; whilst the government would have doubtless made compensation for any loss which the inroad might have caused. But the barbarians into whose hands the maiden fell, quarrelled among themselves respecting their right to the captive; and one, more inhuman than the rest, clove her skull with his tomahawk.

It so happened that the girl's betrothed was amongst us, and of the state of his feelings I leave you to judge; yet was it necessary, situated as we were, to deal mercifully with the perpetrators of the black deed, to whom, from motives of policy, no public punishment was awarded.

But it is time that I return to my detail of military events, to which every successive day added a deeper and more awful interest.

We were yet writhing under the effects of the repulse at Bennington, when intelligence of the failure of Colonel St. Leger's attempts upon Fort Stanwix was communicated to us. Threatened by a force greatly superior to his own, and deserted and betrayed by his Indian allies, that officer was reluctantly compelled to relinquish several important advantages which he had obtained; and he was now in full retreat across the country, with the intention, if possible, of effecting his escape upon Montreal.

I need not observe that such a communication, received at such a moment, excited no little alarm among all to whom it was communicated. If the enemy were in sufficient force to detach largely from our immediate front, at a moment when an attack might daily be anticipated, what probability was there that they would be unable to oppose, as successfully, our forcing one of the many admirable *positions* with which the country around Albany abounded? *and should* we fail in penetrating to that place before the *winter set fairly* in, our prospects would, indeed, be of the *most gloomy* nature.

Nor was this the only consideration which thrust itself fearfully into view. Rumours, apparently not without foundation, were afloat, of detached corps hanging upon our communications. Fort Edward was already menaced; even Fort William had been threatened; nor was it safe to forward the smallest convoy of stores, except under the protection of a numerous and well-appointed guard. But, above all, our information proved to be, not only defective, but incorrect. Instead of a country every where friendly, we found ourselves in the heart of a district decidedly and bitterly hostile. Few recruits joined our standards, and of these few, many were not to be trusted; whilst the American General Greene was well known to receive daily reinforcements of militia, gathered, as well from this, as from the more remote settlements. Then, again, desertions began to be with us matters of frequent occurrence. Of the two hundred and fifty provincials which originally formed part of our strength, scarcely one hundred remained; and of these, one or two usually went over to the enemy every night. True, a reinforcement of some hundreds of Germans came in about this time, as well as drafts for several of the British battalions, and a few recruits for ourselves; but on the whole, the army was greatly diminished, and was daily diminishing in numbers, whilst its *morale* had undeniably undergone a change by no means for the better. Nor did the evil end even here. Our leader's proceedings began to form the subject of frequent, and not very favourable discussion, in all parts of the camp. Whilst some condemned the inconsiderate rashness which had carried us thus far from our supplies and entangled us in a desert country, others exclaimed loudly against the wavering and timid policy, which kept us so long inactive, at a moment when every consideration of common prudence required a prompt advance. Even our generals themselves restrained not their tongues from giving utterance to such criticisms. General Phillips, in particular, was loud in condemning the indecision by which all our operations were marked; and Fraser, though personally a friend of General Burgoyne, could hardly smother his impatience, or suppress similar complaints. Yet is it no more

than just towards Burgoyne to observe, that he labour at this juncture under disadvantages of no ordinary nature and if his movements were less prompt than they migh and perhaps ought to have been, it is very possible th they were dictated by a sense of what was due, both t himself, and to the brave army of which he was i command.

General Burgoyne had as yet received no advices fro New York, indicative of any intention on the part of S William Clinton to operate in his favour by an advance u the Hudson. Now, this of itself was a grievous disap pointment to one whose plans were all formed with a vie to such co-operation, and who had anticipated, on settin out, that a junction of forces would take place, if not a Albany, certainly a few leagues below it. But from Al bany we were now distant not more than forty mile whereas the corps which we had expected to meet ther was not yet, as far as we knew, in march from the in trenched camp, situated at thrice that distance from th point of rendezvous. Again, our means of transport, ori ginally scanty, became every hour more and more inade quate to the demands of the army; for the horses knocke up from incessant labour, and all our efforts to recruit then failed,—whilst the necessity which existed of leaving stron garrisons at the posts in our rear, operated as a seriou drain upon a force, from the first scarcely competent to th successful accomplishment of an enterprise so hazardous a that in which we were engaged. All these matters wer doubtless felt in their full force by General Burgoyne, t whom a separate command was new; and if they produce a thousand doubts and misgivings, as to the proper mea sures which it behoved him to adopt, these emergencie were not different from what might have been expected Still his doubts and misgivings were rendered but too ma nifest to the troops. They also began to entertain suspi cions that all things went not on aright: and the confi dence which they had originally experienced, both in *themselves* and their leaders, suffered from that moment *considerable* diminution.

CHAPTER VI.

It was now the month of September, and my health being in a great measure restored, I was about to return to my duty, when I received a message one morning, through an orderly sergeant, indicating that the general desired to see me. I obeyed the summons without delay, and following my conductor, was led towards a sort of log-hut, which the pioneers had erected about a quarter of a mile in rear of the regular encampment. It was here that our commander-in-chief had fixed his head-quarters; several tents in which his staff and attendants lodged being beside it, whilst about a stone's throw apart, was a tall marquee, inhabited, as I was given to understand, by the lady of Baron Reidesdel, her children, and female servants.

On entering the hut, I beheld General Burgoyne seated beside a table, on which lay a multitude of maps and papers; and near him stood my friend and relation, Captain Fraser, with whom he seemed to be in earnest conversation. He turned his face towards me, and having ascertained from Fraser who I was, pointed to a stool, on which he desired that I would sit down.

"Young man," said he, "I have sent for you, because I have received from Captain Fraser the most favourable report of your gallantry and good conduct; and because I am desirous, at his recommendation, of employing you upon a service which will entitle you to the highest rewards it may be in my power to bestow. Are you willing to embark upon an enterprise of no ordinary hazard? Have you any reluctance to risk your life in order to advance the fortunes of this army?"

To say that I heard this speech without emotion would be to speak falsely. My heart leaped, as it were, to my throat; but if there was something of apprehension in the *feeling which at first* caused this agitation, it soon gave

way to a sense of honest pride, that I had been thus spc
of, and was thus favoured. I replied without hesitat
that I was both willing and ready to undertake any
on which it should please the general to employ me;
that I would gladly, not only hazard, but lay down my
at once, to secure the smallest benefit either to the a
or its leader.

"You have spoken bravely, sir," replied the gen
smiling; "and that you may have at once a foretaste o
fortune that awaits you, provided your zeal and dilig
be as I anticipate, permit me to present you with this c
mission. It confers temporary and local rank only, bec
to such only my authority extends; but you may rely
having it confirmed, as soon as the despatch which
now preparing to send off, shall reach the Horse-gu
And now, Mr. Macdirk, you may retire. Captain F
will fully instruct you in the business which you are a
to undertake, and you will, of course, consider all tha
said to you, as spoken in the strictest confidence. Till
fitting moment arrive, you will continue to do duty
your old leader, though you will be prepared to giv
your personal attendance as often as I may require."
saying, the general rose and bowed; upon which F
put his arm within mine, and we quitted the hut.

It were utterly impossible for me to describe the sta
mind into which the preceding scene threw me. I f
myself of a sudden, and when I least expected it, adva
up to the rank of a commissioned officer, and gladdened
the promise of future advancement from one who posse
every means of fulfilling it. So far all my thoughts
agreeable,—so agreeable indeed, as to border on extr
gance. But then there were conditions to be attended
there was some service to be performed more than ordin
hazardous, upon the happy accomplishment of which
prospects were made distinctly to depend. What c
this be? I neither am, nor ever was a coward, yet
me confess the truth, though there was nothing for whi
longed more earnestly than an explanation, I shrank
instinctive dread from demanding it. I was afraid—

and positively afraid,—not to face death, for that I had faced often enough already to have acquired a sort of constitutional contempt for it; but I dreaded my own inability to support the brilliant character which it was very evident my friend Fraser had bestowed on me. It was my prudence and discretion, not my physical courage, that I doubted.

Fraser read my agitation in my countenance, though I did my best to conceal it, and he laughed at it. "Why, Macdirk!" said he, "I gave you credit for greater nerve than you seem to possess. What ails you, man? Are you not extremely fortunate in obtaining promotion thus early? and is it not honourable to you in the highest degree, that you should be deemed worthy of our general's confidence?"

I could only answer these questions in the affirmative; "but" continued I, "who knows whether I am competent to fulfil the task which he has done me the honour to assign me? It may require greater experience and more intelligence than I possess; for you know I am as yet a young soldier, though certainly a very zealous one."

"Tut, tut!" replied he, "I will answer for your fitness. And now let us withdraw to some place apart, that I may explain to you the nature of the undertaking in which you are about to embark."

We walked on for some time, clearing the encampment, and passing the sentries, till we gained an open and elevated spot, where no intruder could break in upon us without timely warning being given of his approach. Here Fraser seated himself, and invited me to do the same; he then began a conversation, of which I need scarcely observe that it was to me a deeply interesting one.

"Macdirk," said he, "you are not so unskilful in the business of campaigning as to be ignorant that this army has got itself into a devil of a scrape. Whether Burgoyne be to blame, or Howe, or Clinton, or the Government at home, or all combined, is a matter of very little moment now; but that we are entangled in a net from which it will be no easy matter to extricate ourselves with honour, *the rawest recruit among us* must perceive. Don't you think,

that to be the means of cutting this Gordian knot, would of itself be satisfactory to any man?"

I nodded, rather than spoke, an assent; upon which he continued—

"The great question to be solved at present is, whether it be prudent to advance or retreat; for to remain where we are much longer, is to ensure our certain destruction. Now that is a matter which cannot be ascertained, unless some communication be opened with the troops in New York. How do you think this might be done?"

I answered with perfect truth, that I could offer no opinion upon such a subject, but I supposed that General Howe, or Sir William Clinton would take care to inform us, as soon as they had matured their plans and were ready to act upon them.

"They mature their plans!" answered he, with a smile of bitter scorn. "As to old Howe, the fellow never had head enough to form any plan, unless it were to entrap some silly wench, or pick some young fellow's pocket; and Clinton is eternally forming plans upon which he never acts, and making schemes, for the happy execution of which he never finds a fitting season. If we wait for information communicated spontaneously from them, we shall wait, I suspect, till doomsday. No, no, my friend, it is we that must open this communication; and you are the man to do so, or I greatly mistake you."

"I open this communication! In the name of common sense, how can I, ignorant as I am of the country, pretend to make my way through the heart of the rebel army?"

Fraser was silent for some minutes, during which he looked steadily into my face, as if he would have read my inmost soul, and weighed my very feelings before they were roused. "Macdirk," said he at length, "these are not times when a man who loves his country must be very fastidious as to the means which he adopts to serve her. As I said before, we are in a desperate plight, and desperate measures only will save us. You must undertake this business, for I have pledged myself that you should; and *though you* put your neck in jeopardy by so doing, what

matters it? If you be prudent, you will escape, and then a rapid promotion awaits you."

Another pause of some moments occurred, for my assurances that I would attempt any thing practicable can hardly be said to have broken it, when Fraser again resumed. "I presume you are possessed of too much good sense not to be aware, that the character of every action takes it tone, not from the opinions of others respecting it, but from the motive which dictates its performance. You are likewise too much of a soldier not to be convinced, that he who obeys his general only does his duty, let the order be of what nature or tendency it may."

To both of these propositions I readily assented. "Well, then," continued he, "suppose General Burgoyne were to require you or me to desert our colours,—not for the purpose of really acting as traitors, but to further some great end of his own,—do you not think that we should be justified in obeying him?"

Even now I could not comprehend the object at which he was driving; so I replied vaguely and in general terms, that I did not believe any general would demand such a sacrifice from the meanest of his followers, and that it would be time enough to discuss the propriety of obedience or disobedience when an order so singular were issued.

"Then, my good fellow," said he, speaking in a tone of great earnestness, and laying his hand upon my shoulder, "that moment has actually come. I will cut this matter short. Of the difficulties into which we have fallen I have already told you. We advance, it is true, on the morrow, —that is to say, we cross the river, and shall probably push forward at all hazards as far as Albany; but beyond that point we cannot move till the troops from New York can be induced to lend us their assistance. How are they to be told of our perilous situation?—for if we be in jeopardy now, we shall be a thousand times more in danger when the Hudson is between us and our communications. There is but one way of effecting this end. To attempt a passage through the enemy's lines unnoticed, would be to *expose yourself to certain* destruction. Five messengers

have been already sent out, and all five have, as our spies inform us, suffered death. You must desert; you must pretend to pass over to the enemy, and then you must find your way as you best can, to the coast. No doubt you will have obstacles to overcome both numerous and severe; but the thing must be done,—and you must do it."

I was so confounded at this declaration, that for some time after Fraser had ceased to speak, I sat absolutely at a loss for a reply. Had he proposed to me to make my way in disguise, though I should have felt that the service was a desperate one, I would have undertaken it, if not cheerfully, at all events without a murmur; but to adopt the method now pointed out was to put in jeopardy, not only my life but my honour. As soon as I could so far command myself as to speak, I positively and flatly declined the trust. I expressed not only my disinclination to the arrangement, but the absolute impossibility of performing it with effect; for what excuse could I offer to the enemy for such a proceeding, should I be so fortunate as to reach their lines unhurt? and if I did reach them, where was the probability that I should be permitted to penetrate as far as New York? "No, no," continued I, "propose any thing to me except this, and I will accomplish it, or perish in the attempt; but if I must put my reputation in hazard, in order to purchase advancement in a profession which requires in its members the nicest sense of honour, I will rather continue as I am, unknown and disregarded, for ever."

I spoke feelingly and warmly, and my tone was not without its effect upon Fraser; but he persisted in urging the task upon me. He pointed out, that of my reputation both General Burgoyne and himself would take charge; that, if I perished, ample justice would be done to my memory; whereas, if I succeeded, my renown would brighten in proportion to the temporary cloud that had been cast over it. Above all, he urged me to take into consideration the prodigious benefits which I might be the *means of* conferring upon an entire army.

Though I could not but acknowledge that there was *great justice* in many of his arguments, they were not yet

o convince me. I persisted in my refusal, at all
'hilst things continued as little desperate as they
d begged him to urge me no more on a point on
y mind was quite made up.
· either was, or pretended to be, both hurt and
by my manner. "And your commission," said
what purpose was that conferred upon you? Will
in the reward without having striven to merit it?"
tain Fraser," replied I haughtily, "the commission
erred upon me,—at least I accepted it,—not as a
; fee for future services, but as a reward for the
it since there appears to be a doubt on the subject,
solved at once. Here is the bit of paper;—carry it
the general, and tell him, that I would rather serve
vate volunteer, honourably and uprightly, than
dignity of field-marshal, by conduct such as my
scieuce cannot approve."
out the parchment whilst I spoke, my face glow-
a sense of insulted dignity; but Fraser pushed it
id throwing his arms about my neck, begged me
his hasty observation.
p your commission, my dear boy," cried he; "you
peared more worthy of it than now; for though I
ur scruples ill-founded and even ridiculous, I can-
respect the principle from which they spring. Let
ir of our past conversation be kept strictly to our-
'hink over my proposal again, and perhaps the mo-
y arrive when you will discover, that a soldier never
)bly as when he risks, in his country's service, all that
ear to him." So saying, he rose from the ground,
itrolled back to the camp, arm in arm, as we had
t, on the best terms, and in perfect good-humour.
vill readily believe that the proceedings of the
were of such a nature as utterly to unfit me for
upon any of those employments in which it was cus-
o spend our time during the season of inaction. The
f my comrades was distasteful to me; I could not
m as formerly; so I withdrew to my own wigwam,
re in a train of thought, in which it would be
) *say whether* the pleasant or the painful most

predominated. On one hand I considered, that an opportunity was now presented of advancing my fortunes, such as might never offer again; and that if I neglected it, the time might, and probably would come, when I should bitterly lament my folly. On the other, the risk of perishing, and perishing like a coward, with a reputation tarnished, and a name never to be pronounced without reproach, —these considerations operated powerfully with me, to adhere to the determination I had already expressed, of absolutely refusing the part assigned to me. For it had been explicitly stated, that no step would be taken to preserve my memory from disgrace, till the fact of my having fallen a sacrifice should be ascertained. My own safety, indeed, required that neither the general nor Fraser should intrust me with any written document, from which, in case of untoward events occurring, a justification might be drawn; and to permit the circumstance of their connivance with my pretended crime to get abroad, would infallibly ruin the entire plot. Real deserters passed over to the enemy's lines every day; and should it be known in our camp that a spy had assumed that character, no great time would elapse ere the Americans would become equally aware of it. Besides, what probability existed, even allowing that I reached their army in safety, that I should be permitted to pass unobserved to the rear? and if I did, were there not numerous posts in the Highlands, through which it would be necessary to make my way, in order to reach New York? The whole affair accordingly appeared in a light so little satisfactory, that though ambition pulled forcibly to one side, prudence, and what I was willing to dignify by the name of honour, pulled no less strongly to the other; and I found myself, after many hours' intense cogitation, as far from arriving at a final determination as when the proposal was first laid before me.

The same doubts and misgivings which had tormented me during the day, continued to torment me when it departed. I lay down, indeed, but it was not to sleep, for *with sleep* the fever under which I laboured was totally at *variance.* After tossing about, therefore, for some time, I *fancied that* the night air might refresh me, and, wrapping

my cloak about me, I walked forth. It was one of those lovely autumnal nights, when the full harvest-moon shines in all her brilliancy, and every plant and leaf glitters in the dew, which never falls so fast as after a day of burning sunshine. The sky was blue and cloudless, and there was a silence throughout the lines, deep and unbroken, like that which reigned in the camp of the Assyrians, when the Angel of Death fought for Jerusalem. Even the sentinels, as if weary of promenading, stood still, and leaning upon the muzzles of their firelocks, looked up into the heavens; whilst the only sound distinguishable was the murmur of the river as it swept with a quiet rush over its rocky channel.

Of the effect of such a scene upon spirits somewhat overwrought, I need not speak. A calm fell upon me, similar in all respects to that which appeared to dwell upon the rest of Nature's works; and I strolled forward in the direction of the outposts, forgetful of every idea or sensation, except those which surrounding objects were calculated to excite.

It was not long before the bodily machine began to feel the influence of a mind reconciled to itself, and eased of troublesome speculations. A desire to sleep, which all my efforts to promote had failed in exciting, stole gradually but imperceptibly over me; and I returned soon after midnight to my tent, where a sound and refreshing slumber fell upon me.

CHAPTER VII.

At an early hour in the morning of the 13th, I was awoke by the entrance of an orderly, who came to inform me that the troops were getting under arms, and that the passage of the river was expected immediately to take place. Of the preparations for this step, which had for some time back been carried on, I was not ignorant. A flotilla of boats having been collected, and an adequate

number of rafts constructed, our people had thrown a bridge across the Hudson, a task to the completion of which no interruption was offered by the Americans; and now all things being in readiness, even to the bringing up of stores and provisions, it was determined to lose no time in turning the work in question to account. I was not surprised at this information, because Fraser, in our conference of the preceding day, had led me to expect it; so I arose, dressed with all haste, and hurried off to assume my proper station with the marksmen.

Nothing could be finer or more imposing than the spectacle which this eventful morning produced. The army, though diminished in point of numbers, and somewhat shorn of its splendour by long and severe service, was still such as no military eye could behold without admiration; and as it defiled over the narrow bridge in column of sections, the regularity of its movements, and the steadiness of its well-ordered tread, failed not to excite, at least in me, much of my former enthusiasm. Nor was the scene without its effect upon others, as well as upon myself. The officers, generally, cleared away from their brows the clouds which had of late hung over them, and exhibited by their bearing, and cheerful countenances, that even yet they anticipated success; whilst the soldiers resumed in a moment that bold and careless demeanour, of which a prolonged inactivity for which they cannot satisfactorily account, never fails to deprive British troops. Even the commander-in-chief, of whose disposition to despond ample proof had already been exhibited, sat in evident delight to watch the progress of an operation, touching the ultimate consequences of which he forbore to form a guess; and spoke and acted like one who had not yet resigned all hope of fortunate issue. Fraser alone took, or appeared to take, no interest in passing events.

"You see, Macdirk," said he to me, "that the General still trusts to your zeal. I have not told him, nor will I tell him, that you reject his offers, and refuse to obey his wishes; *but this much* I do not hesitate to say to yourself, that on *you now*, more than on any other individual, must the *safety of this* army depend. By crossing the river we

commit ourselves, beyond the hope of redemption; and we are utterly ruined, unless Clinton move to support us."

No opportunity was furnished of giving an answer to this speech, for the speaker passed on before I could utter a syllable, and I could only follow in a state of feeling, not very easily described, though certainly far from being so agreeable as that which had but a few moments before possessed me.

To transport the army with its guns, stores, and ammunition, over the Hudson, occupied the whole of the 13th, and the greater part of the 14th of September. It is true that no very vigorous exertions were made to conduct the movement with greater alacrity; but as the weather chanced to be particularly favourable, and the enemy showed no disposition to interfere, little immediate inconvenience arose out of their absence. We took up a position, partly upon the heights, partly in the plains near Saratoga, where we remained unmolested till a late hour in the evening of the 15th.

It is hardly necessary for me to remind you, that in the prosecution of the American war, caution, amounting to timidity, sometimes received the appellation of prudence, and that indecisive and dilatory proceedings, from whatever cause they might arise, passed in too many instances current for the results of wise and sober consideration. There was a sort of instinctive apprehension of unseen dangers in the minds of our leaders in general, which seldom failed to operate with the greatest power on occasions where there existed the feeblest ground for it; and to such General Burgoyne proved himself, on this as on other occasions, not less a slave than his brother commanders. Instead of pushing vigorously forward to Albany at once, from which we were now distant little more than thirty miles, he put his columns in motion on the 15th, only that he might again halt, after compassing a journey of barely five miles. There, at a place called Dovacott, a second position was assumed, with the parade of persons satisfied with the successes which they had already obtained, and anxious to secure them; and there, *during the whole* of the 16th, the main body was kept *in a state of useless* and deplorable inactivity.

Whilst the army at large was thus wasting its time, and furnishing the enemy with all the leisure which they could desire for the completion of their preparations, one or two reconnoitring parties were sent out, confessedly with a view to ascertain the nature and resources of the surrounding country, but more truly, I believe, as a sort of excuse to the mind of the general himself. On this service I chanced to be employed. We found no trace of the rebels within the space which our orders marked out for us, and very little from which to draw up a report different from that which our guides and spies had given previous to the commencement of the campaign. Here, as in the direction of Bennington, sweeping forests universally prevailed. In the heart of these, and at considerable intervals one from another, a few farm-houses and other settlements were placed, and wherever such occurred, there was the usual proportion of green meadow and open fields; but for the most part the scenery was such as prevails in other quarters of America, especially near the lakes, or by the courses of the large rivers. Creeks and smaller streams were indeed more abundant here than we had yet found them, falling in, across the line of our route, with the Hudson's; but these were almost all extremely narrow, some of them quite shallow, and not one capable of impeding the progress either of infantry or artillery for a single hour. Yet General Burgoyne saw fit to delay the march of his columns till they should all be furnished with bridges constructed after a settled model: and the consequence was, that when we did begin again to move, our march was at once tardy, irregular, and cruelly interrupted.

On the 17th we were once more in motion; but the same caution that had hitherto cramped us, continued to exert its influence. No doubt, the road by which we travelled was a bad one. Swamps and creeks intervened so frequently, that occasional halts to enable the pioneers to do their office, were indispensable; whilst detached bodies of the enemy began by degrees to show themselves, though they *studiously* avoided a rencounter with our advance. But these *inconveniences*, though unquestionably considerable, were *not such as to* produce the result which actually occurred.

Our progress was ridiculously slow, and we again halted, about four miles from Still-water, having compassed barely one league and a half from sunrise till afternoon. Here, upon a spot of ground as favourable as could be selected, the camp was pitched, and all things were arranged, as if for a sojourn, not of a few hours, but of many weeks.

It was my fortune this night to be placed in command of a very important and hazardous outpost. Our station lay in front of the army, in an open meadow covered with long rank grass, and intersected by a stream, which, though neither very deep nor very broad, was rendered difficult to pass on account of the steepness of its banks and the rapidity of its current. Over that stream my little band was pushed, for the purpose of covering a working-party, which immediately after nightfall was ordered up to construct a bridge; and being wholly unsupported, or rather entirely in advance of the regular chain, we were left to provide as we best could against such contingencies as might befall. I need not say that in such a situation my feelings were not of the most enviable description.

As the sun had not set when I first took up my ground, some opportunity was given to provide against accidents, of which I gladly and eagerly proceeded to avail myself. I planted my guard, consisting of fifty men, directly in front of the spot marked out for the bridge, and pushed out my sentries in a convex line, some two or three hundred yards in advance. By this arrangement I flattered myself with giving at least some security both to my front and flanks, for the line of sentries fell back on both hands to the river; and trusting to a patrol for the protection of my rear, I endeavoured to persuade myself that all was safe. But as daylight departed, my apprehensions began to gather strength, more especially as the appearance of the sunset seemed to foretel a coming tempest; and when night brought with it darkness the most impenetrable, I trembled for the fate which might await not myself only, but the entire army. That no blame, however, might attach to me, in case any untoward event did occur, I resolved not so much as to *lie down; and the more to* deceive an enemy should any such *pproach, I caused the* fires to be extinguished, and com-

manded the men to maintain a profound but watchful silence.

You will easily believe, that with such impressions upon my mind, I experienced no inclination whatever to sleep. With the departure of the sun's last ray, my perambulations began; and from that moment I ceased not to wander round from one flank of the chain of sentries to another. For some time these excursions were productive of no other results than usually attend the visitations of their vedettes by careful officers; the men were all kept attentive to their duty; but of danger, or the appearance of it, no symptom whatever was exhibited. Yet I could not wholly divest myself of the persuasion that the Americans were aware of our exposed situation, and would avail themselves of it; and the issue proved that neither my forebodings nor suspicions were groundless.

It might be about ten or eleven o'clock, our artificers being in full and rather loquacious employment in the rear, when, on going my rounds, I suddenly caught a sound as of persons moving slowly and with extreme caution through the grass. I stopped short, and, applying my ear to the ground, became instantly satisfied that my sense of hearing had not deceived me, though, to assist that sense with the sense of sight, not my utmost exertions availed any thing. The moon, already in the wane, had not yet risen, and the few stars which from time to time shot forth, were almost immediately darkened by a mass of black clouds, which a strong southerly breeze drove through the sky. I could not, therefore, distinguish any object at the distance of five yards; and even noises became every moment more and more indistinct, as the increasing force of the wind caused the weeds and boughs to wave with greater and greater violence. The tread of men is, however, a sound which when once heard it is not easy to forget; and hence, though the sighing of the wind and the rustling of the long grass caused frequent interruptions, I still caught at intervals the trampling of feet, as if people were defiling past me. I challenged loudly, and my challenge was repeated by the line of sentries, one after another. At this instant, there came a lull in the storm;

for the fresh breeze had gradually increased to a storm; and that lull, in all probability, saved us. Not I alone, but the sentinels, every where overheard the shuffling which a halt suddenly and quietly ordered never fails to produce: and it became apparent to all, that our post would shortly be maintained only by dint of courage and hard fighting.

Thus circumstanced, I felt that not a moment was to be lost. Getting my picket under arms, and despatching a corporal to warn the artificers of their danger, I took with me a patrol of six men, and stole quietly forward towards the spot from whence the sounds seemed to proceed. We had advanced but a few paces in front of the vedettes, when the leading file, in obedience to the orders which I had given them, fired. Instantly there arose a clamour of voices; and the shots being answered by a discharge of twenty or thirty firelocks, a strong body of Americans advanced. They came on, too, upon our right, as if they had been moving for some time unobserved, in the direction of the river, and had succeeded in passing a great number of our sentinels; and in a minute after, we found ourselves warmly and awkwardly engaged with men of whose position, as well as of their numerical strength, we were necessarily ignorant.

In all night attacks, the assailing party has, and must have, at least at the beginning of the fray, a decided advantage. Men do not care, when first fired upon, to face they know not what danger, or from whence proceeding; and hence, if a night attack be but vigorously and prudently followed up, it seldom fails of success. But to be thus followed up, it must be made not by raw militia-men, however individually brave, but by regular troops, well disciplined, and accustomed to act together by word of command. Now the Americans happened not to be disciplined, as our people happened to be the reverse; and hence, though we gave way at first, retreating almost to the edge of the stream, the assailants failed to turn their advantage to a just account. They kept up, indeed, a heavy and incessant fire, more magnificent to behold than destructive in its *effects; but they* hung back, happily for us, in their *advance, and hence gave* us ample time to recover from the

panic into which they had at first thrown us. Our entire strength was by this means brought together, and formed a chain across the point at which the pioneers were employed; after which, instead of waiting to be again attacked, we pushed forward boldly, but with extreme caution, so as to meet and discompose the arrangements of the enemy.

Stealing on in this plight, and preserving a silence the most profound, we gradually drew upon the blaze of the American musketry. As we were ourselves totally unseen all the while, we contrived to approach so near, that at last the faces of the men themselves became perceptible, and we saw before us a dark line, regularly drawn up, and covering in close order a space of several hundred feet, from right to left. The spectacle was at once grand and imposing; for, whatever might be their deficiency in discipline, the fellows showed, by their immovable front, that in courage, at least, they were not deficient; and as they outnumbered us by at least six to one, it savoured somewhat of excess of rashness, to think of closing with them. But I knew that my situation was a desperate one; I knew also that my followers were brave, and could safely be depended on; so I gave the word, in a loud tone, to fire a volley, and close. The order was instantly obeyed. My people, though in extended files, rushed forward to the charge, and in an instant we were engaged hand to hand with our assailants.

The immediate effect of a charge so spirited was to cause the enemy to recoil; they even lost their order for a time, and in some parts of the line turned and fled. But the odds against us were tremendous, and soon began to tell. The Americans' fire alone was overwhelming; and though our brave fellows withstood it nobly, they were at last compelled to give ground. And now it may truly be said, that we fought for life or death. Borne back to the edge of the stream, at a point where its steep and rocky bank rendered all effort to pass hopeless, nothing seemed left for us, except to sell our lives at the dearest; for a cry suddenly arose of most perilous import, forbidding all expectation of quarter, even in case of submission. Where *this cry originated*, I know not; for, to do them justice, it *was no part* of the American policy to render the war one

of extermination; but that it did sound over the noise of the strife, and was repeated from man to man, I have the evidence of my senses for declaring. Yet I much question whether it did not, upon the whole, prove serviceable to us. If any man had previously entertained an idea of surrender, the shout of "No Quarter!" caused him instantly to abandon it; and hence all fought like persons labouring under the sure conviction, that their lives must pay the forfeit either of cowardice or insubordination.

There was, upon the summit of the right bank, a stripe of low underwood, of the slender cover afforded by which we gladly availed ourselves. There we lay for a full hour, exposed to a fusillade, which, but for the thick darkness which rendered it comparatively harmless, must have annihilated us in a few minutes; and, strange to say, not an effort was made by the troops in our rear, either to support us in our position, or bring us off. That the alarm was, indeed, communicated to them, a variety of circumstances pointed out. In an instant all the fires in the camp were extinguished; the roll of drums, and the braying of bugles came up upon the blast, and every other sound which usually accompanies the sudden calling of men from sleep to arms, was distinctly heard. But not a company was put in motion, at least as far as we could discover, though of the extreme peril of our situation, it appeared impossible that our leader could be ignorant.

Fortunately for us, however, the Americans were slow to believe that a British general could give up one of his advanced posts to destruction. These indications of a general stir in the camp were no sooner observed, than the fire of the rebels began to slacken, and they gradually withdrew from before a handful of men, not one of whom, had they persevered a few minutes longer, could have escaped.

The last shot had been long fired, and the last shadow of an American withdrawn, before we ventured to emerge from the thicket, or feel our way towards the front. Seeing, however, that no enemy rallied, we at length took courage to approach the open country; and our satisfaction was far from trifling, when we found that not a vestige of the force

with which we had just been engaged, remained. They were gone, leaving behind them manifest traces of their route in the long grass trodden down into numerous pathways; and great and well-founded was our joy, when we perceived that these all led in a direction decidedly towards the front. Thus assured that the retrogression was no feint to draw us from our place of safety, and expose us to fresh assaults, we proceeded to assume once more the ground from which we had so lately been driven; whilst a messenger was despatched, with all haste, to the rear, in order to acquaint the general with the result of the skirmish.

It was not without considerable difficulty that the latter contrived, during the darkness of this tempestuous night, to make his way across the stream; but he did cross it, and in due time the pioneers, who had retreated on the first fire, returned to complete their tasks. In the mean while, having carefully replaced my sentinels, I sent out parties in all directions, to examine the field, as well as they could, for the wounded and dying.

It might be about one or two o'clock in the morning when the Americans retreated; from which period, however, up to the return of dawn, no fresh alarm occurred. As may well be believed, that was to us a period of no common anxiety and interest. It is true that the general was no sooner made aware of our deliverance than he ordered up an entire battalion, for the double purpose of supporting us, and more effectually covering the operations of the artificers. But even the presence of this large force in our rear was far from rendering us satisfied with our position, or allaying that agitation and excitement which the events of the earlier part of the night had occasioned. No man closed an eye; whilst all watched, with an impatience the most unbounded, the gradual approach of light.

In a word, the night, though marked by no fresh adventures, passed painfully and heavily away; and we hailed the first streaks of dawn with a degree of delight, for which I am sure there was no solid foundation in the circumstances by which we were surrounded.

CHAPTER VIII.

THERE was no necessity on the morning of the 18th for any particular exertion of authority in order to get both the pickets and the supporting battalion under arms. The former, indeed, from the close of the nocturnal encounter, had not quitted their ranks, merely sitting down upon the ground, with their firelocks in their hands; the latter, if they slept at all, slept so lightly, that the faintest cry sufficed to rouse them. And it was well for us that such precautions had been taken. Though unsuccessful in their night attack, the Americans appeared determined not to permit the construction of our bridges to proceed without interruption; for the morning was yet gray and obscure when a large body of infantry, supported by a few cavalry, were observed moving towards us.

Not a moment was lost on our side in making preparations to meet and repel the threatened attack. There was a small wood, or rather copse, upon the right, somewhat in advance of our line of sentries, which we immediately pushed forward to occupy; whilst the regiment in support hastily passed the stream, and took up the ground which my picket had abandoned. At the same time a couple of six-pounders were planted under the ridge of a rising ground, so as to enfilade any column which might approach the spot where the workmen were still busy; and a company of light infantry, being thrown in extended order forward, lay down, for the sake of concealment, in the long grass.

It is to be observed, that the country immediately in our front chanced to be particularly clear and open. The forest, parting, as it were, to the right and left, gave room to a bare district, full of hills and valleys and natural inequalities, along which a formidable force of Americans was now approaching, with the evident intention of driving back our outposts and breaking down the bridges already in a state of forwardness.

Every man who has faced danger by night as well as by

day, must be aware, how different his sensations are on each of these occasions. Having ample light to direct us, and seeing clearly how and from what quarter we were about to be assailed, our arrangements were made and our posts assumed with perfect coolness; and we made ready in the highest spirits to give the rebels a reception.

They came on, for a while, in compact and regular order, the head of their column covered by clouds of skirmishers, who pressed forward apparently in confusion, but with every demonstration of courage, till, having reached the brow of an eminence about long musket-shot from our position, they halted, as if irresolute what further course to pursue. From the height of the swell on which they stood, we were at no loss to conjecture that they had obtained a perfect view of our dispositions; and their evident wavering gave testimony that these were not according to their wishes. Nevertheless, it seemed as if some spirit more daring than the rest at last gained the ascendancy; for after a pause of several minutes, the skirmishers again pressed on, and the column began to descend.

These movements were no sooner ascertained than our riflemen threw themselves each behind a tree or knoll, and the light infantry, rising from their places of concealment, assumed an attitude of defiance. For half a minute perhaps, or something more, all remained thus; till the enemy arriving within point-blank range, our bugles sounded, and a dropping and desultory tiraillade began. It was kept up with considerable warmth on both sides, the enemy sometimes pressing forward, at other times retiring; but on our part no change of ground was effected, for our sole object was to maintain ourselves where we were, and keep the assailants in check. As the column advanced, however, our light infantry gradually and reluctantly fell back, till at last they fairly turned the copse, and we riflemen were fain to withdraw, in order to escape capture. But we had not thus long held our post for no purpose. Of the enemy's skirmishers several were seen to drop, and many more to steal away like men disabled, whilst their column itself received one well-directed volley, just as it gained the left of the *copse*, and was preparing to deploy.

In the mean while the battalion in rear had formed line, and advanced so far as to render the escape of the skirmishers safe and speedy. Opening to the right and left, that its front might be left clear, we threw ourselves on either flank; and the enemy deploying at the same moment, a close and desperate contest was anticipated.

But before a musket was fired on either side, the enemy began suddenly to waver, and all the exertions of their officers failed in preserving order in the ranks. At this moment, our guns, which had hitherto been kept with great judgment concealed, were run to the brow of the hill, and opened with round and grape. They were admirably served; and the first discharge striking full into the American line, the confusion, which had already begun, became complete. They turned and fled, not so much as a skirmisher pausing to cover them; and though we pursued with all haste, firing from time to time as an opportunity offered, they escaped with the loss of some eight or ten men killed and wounded. This was the last effort made to interrupt our operations, or hinder our passage of the creek; and the remainder of the day was spent in quiet, as well at the outposts as in camp.

In the mean while, the working-parties, so far from intermitting in their tasks, toiled on with increased diligence and in greater numbers. Not one bridge, but three, were by this means completed, each capable of bearing the heaviest ordnance which we had brought with us into the field; and an advance, as the immediate prelude of a general action, was talked of, as the occurrence of the morrow.

Being relieved from the dangerous and toilsome duty of outpost, the 18th was spent by me, partly in the refreshment of a sound sleep, and partly in examining the nature of the position occupied by our army. It was a range of heights, which advanced on the left till it became parallel with the course of the Hudson, and gradually shelved away towards the right, where it ended in a valley. Short as our sojourn here had been, General Burgoyne appeared to have bestowed much labour on its fortification; for there were breastworks here and there, a redoubt in the centre,

and a battery covered by a ditch to enfilade the whole. Besides this, he had constructed several forts, in which his stores of provision and other necessaries were laid up, and the bateaux and vessels were all moored under cover of our guns, close to the extreme left of the line.

Nothing befel during the night, either to the army at large or to myself in particular, worthy of being repeated. The Americans, as if satisfied with the results of their former attempts, did not molest us; and my private meditations received no interruption from any renewed applications on the part of Fraser, or our chief. But on the morrow affairs assumed a widely different aspect. An hour before sunrise the whole army formed in three columns of march, each fronting one of the bridges which had been constructed for it; and as soon as there was light enough to distinguish objects at the distance of a mile, the long expected and long wished for movement began.

As this was certainly one of the most memorable steps taken during the whole campaign, and may be said with perfect truth to have decided our fate, it may not be amiss if I lay before you a minute and particular account of it.

Having already described the nature of the position occupied by the British army previous to its advance, it is not necessary that I should say more on that subject. With respect to the enemy, again, they had withdrawn rom Saratoga several weeks before, and having established themselves at Stillwater, about halfway between the former place and Albany, it was expected that they would there abide an encounter. We were the more confirmed in this notion, as several deserters came in with intelligence, that General Gates was busily engaged in the erection of works; that he had recalled Arnold from Fort Stanwix, whither on the alarm of Colonel St. Leger's successes he had hastened; and that all the militia-men who could be prevailed upon to bear arms, were moved into the camp, and there enrolled in battalions. It is hardly necessary to add, that the site of our own camp, which we quitted on the 19th, was not many leagues distant from that of General Gates. We calculated, indeed, on reaching *the vicinity* of the latter an hour or two before sunset,

provided no attempts were made to harass or interrupt us by the way; and we looked forward to the 20th, as to the day which should decide the fate of New England, as well as of the brave army which was now invading it.

With respect to the general bearings of the country which divided one corps from the other, almost enough has been stated to convey to your minds a tolerably accurate conception. For a mile or two beyond the stream, little or no wood intervened; but there were several valleys, hemmed in on each side by hills; and one which, from its peculiar roughness, as well as the rugged nature of its banks, deserves to be styled a ravine. Across that, it was necessary for our troops to move; and as it chanced to be pretty extensive, stretching on one side almost to the river, whilst on the other it pushed into the woods, a good deal of caution seemed necessary, in order to avoid being arrested there. I have said that the army formed this morning in three distinct columns of march: the following is the order which these assumed, and the routes which they followed:

On the left of the whole, were arranged the brigade of General Reidesdel, with the entire park of artillery under the command of Major-general Philips. This column pursued the main road, which wound through the meadows parallel with the Hudson, and was covered in its progress by a detachment of yagers, led on by a gallant Hessian called Rembach. The right column, again, consisted of Brigadier-general Fraser's corps, sustained by Colonel Breyman's Germans, which made a circuit so as to pass the ravine without plunging into it, and afterwards to protect the advance of the centre or main body. Its front and flanks were covered by the marksmen, by the Canadian companies, and the Indians; who struck off towards the woods, as most convenient for their particular style of fighting. Between these detached corps moved the main body, under the immediate orders of General Burgoyne. It was directed to advance straight to the front; to descend one side of the glen and mount the other, without pausing; and to form on the further height, where it might wait in comparative safety till the detached corps should have made good their passage, and resumed their communications.

Finally, one regiment, the 47th, was left behind, partly as a reserve, and partly to defend the bateaux and stores; whilst proper signals were agreed upon, to give notice of the progress which each corps was making, should they become unavoidably separated the one from the other.

Being myself attached to the right column, I can pretend to give no very exact or regular account of the movements either of the left or centre; for, the moment when the word was given to advance, all took the directions severally pointed out to them. For ourselves, we moved on, following the bend of a semicircular hill, till we became lost in the mazes of a forest apparently interminable; but we met with no opposition during a march of some hours, even our skirmishers failing to discover an enemy, though most assiduous in looking for him.

The orders given to us at starting were, to gain the extremity of the ravine with as little delay as possible; and then, declining to the left, to take possession of a lofty eminence which overlooked the crest of the range of hills which the centre and left columns were ascending. A journey of two hours brought us to this point, where, just as the woodlands began, the valley ended, and we commenced our march in echellon towards the left, without having as yet been called upon to fire a musket or deploy a company. This movement, however, had hardly been made, when the report of several cannon gave intimation that more than a skirmish was impending; and we pressed forward in the firm expectation of being engaged as soon as we should clear the thicket and emerge into the open country.

It can hardly be said that our expectations were without foundation; for the first spectacle which presented itself was a heavy column of Americans in full march to fall upon our main body. The latter had, it appeared, passed the ravine previous to our arrival at the height which we were directed to occupy; and the former, not expecting a second column to debouch from woods which they had regarded as impervious, were preparing to assault what they considered the extreme right of the British line.

As yet little else than an exchange of cannon-shots had passed between the hostile armies, when the head of ou

column showing itself upon the hill, the enemy instantly halted, and the firing ceased. For a moment, and only for a moment, all things remained quiet; but the Americans, suddenly facing about, began to countermarch, and in less than a quarter of an hour were lost to our view. They fell back, however, not like men bent on a precipitate retreat, nor yet with the wavering step which usually characterizes the manœuvres of generals doubtful what course to pursue,—but promptly, briskly, and in admirable order, giving us the best ground for supposing that their plans, instead of being deranged, were merely altered. Whoever entertained such ideas at the moment, was certainly not mistaken in the ground on which he formed them; for in as short a time as the state of the case would permit, we received evidence enough that a new arrangement of attack had been made, and was already in process of being pursued.

Our troops had all come up, and were in full possession of the hill, when there arose suddenly from the extreme left a fire of musketry, which continued in volleys, like the rolling of drums, for several minutes. How or where this was going on, it was impossible for us to say; for though our position was a commanding one, not only the natural inequalities of the ground, but a good deal of wood scattered here and there, hindered us from seeing further towards the left, than the post occupied by the centre column. It appeared, however, that even this attack, fierce as it must have doubtless been, was not that on which the enemy mainly depended for success. Before we could well arrange our thoughts, far less reply to the questions which each eagerly put to the other, a fresh operation developed itself, and the main body became warmly, and, as it struck us, very unequally engaged, at a moment when such an event was least expected. A corps of some four or five thousand men, led on as we afterwards heard by General Arnold, suddenly pushed against the left of Burgoyne's division; and a contest began as warm and as well contested as it has ever been my fortune to witness, either as an actor or spectator.

To oppose this tremendous assault, only three British *battalions, and these* extremely weak, could be brought up.

So well had the enemy arranged matters, that for nearly four hours our left could bring no assistance to the centre, nor even one flank of the centre support the other; whilst we upon the right had received orders so decisive on no account whatever to give up the high ground, that Fraser, though as enterprising an officer as any in the service, felt himself perfectly paralyzed. We were accordingly condemned to stand passive spectators of an affair, in which nothing short of the most determined courage, as well as a state of discipline the most commendable, could have saved a whole brigade from utter annihilation.

As I am speaking to men who have themselves served, and know how laudably jealous regiments are of their renown, it would be unjust in me to conceal the numbers of the corps which on that day covered themselves with glory. They were the 20th, the 21st, and the 62d, who, from three o'clock in the afternoon till seven in the evening, remained unbroken under a fire which left not one fourth of their originally inadequate numbers fit to do duty.

Whilst this was going on, General Fraser, whose impatience was sufficiently manifested by his look and gestures, despatched aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp to General Burgoyne, requesting permission to move from his vantage ground, should it be only for a time. What became of these messengers it is not for me to surmise; but as I happened to be near the general during the greater part of the day, I can testify that not one returned,—a contingency which failed not to increase, to a degree beyond all endurance, the anxiety under which that gallant fellow had previously laboured. At last, despairing of receiving instructions, he determined to act for himself. Leaving a body of German grenadiers to defend the hill, he gave the word for the rest of the brigade to advance, and in two seconds we were in full march, upon the flank of the American column of attack.

It was a splendid spectacle to behold the cool and soldier-like manner in which General Arnold disposed himself to *keep in check* this bold advance. Wheeling up a couple *of his rearmost* battalions, he caused several hundred rifle-*men to extend* across the open country, and then urged

them forward to meet the marksmen and Canadians, who covered the approach of Fraser's column. No great while elapsed ere we were engaged. The enemy, however, knew their ground; they were well drilled, admirable shots, and by no means deficient in bravery; and hence, though bravely attacked by men not more ignorant than themselves in the art of skirmishing, they would not be driven in. Even the advance of Breyman's corps in solid column hardly succeeded in moving them; nor is it easy to say what result might have ensued, had not other aid been at hand. But at this critical juncture a fresh force came up from a quarter where we scarcely expected it; and the victory, which for so many hours had hung doubtful, finally inclined to the side of the British arms.

I have said that the enemy, on observing the arrival of Fraser's corps on the high ground at the right of the ravine, suddenly suspended the attack which they had at first directed against our centre, and turned a heavy column, supported by a couple of light guns, towards our left. This soon fell in with General Reidesdel's brigade, with which it exchanged several close and well-directed volleys; but, contenting himself with alarming these troops, the officer in command of the Americans immediately withdrew again, and united himself with the corps which General Arnold was preparing to lead against the regiments above specified. Some light troops were, however, left, if not sufficient to hold the wood, at all events capable of embarrassing the movements of a column incumbered rather than assisted, in a close country, by the presence of a numerous artillery; and these contrived, by dint of repeated demonstrations, to impose for some time upon General Reidesdel, so as to hinder him from detaching any portion of his force to the assistance of Burgoyne. General Philips, however, who accompanied Reidesdel, and took charge, in a peculiar manner, of the park, was not slow in seeing through the veil which sufficed to blind the eyes of his brother officer. As the sound of firing increased on his right, he became more and more convinced, that to their column no serious injury *was intended; and he* at length prevailed upon General

Reidesdel to sanction a movement with four guns and a battalion towards the scene of action.

Driving in the American riflemen, General Philips succeeded, by dint of extraordinary perseverance, in making his way through the wood. He arrived just as the 20th, after behaving with a degree of gallantry almost unprecedented, had begun to give way, and the enemy were pushing forward to occupy a point, from which they might have enfiladed the other battalions, already more than sufficiently pressed. Philips saw this, and made haste to remedy the evil. He dashed forward, bringing with him only a few followers; rallied the broken regiment, led it back in the most magnificent style to the charge, and then, hurrying away to the right, brought up his guns to the edge of the wood, from which they opened a tremendous fire of grape and canister upon the enemy's flank.

The effect of these arrangements became manifest in a moment. After a brave but ineffectual attempt to carry the cannon at the point of the bayonet, the Americans were compelled to give way; and fresh troops joining the 20th already advancing to the charge, the rout became complete.

Nor was the case different on our side. The riflemen, perceiving that their comrades were in full retreat, fell back with precipitation on their support, which in its return retired upon the column from which it had been drawn, and that being exposed to a sweeping fire from Philips's guns, soon lost its order and fled. Yet were our people too much worn down by past exertions, and too much enfeebled, many of them, by wounds, not less than fatigue, to take full advantage of the panic. The closing in of night, likewise, was favourable to the Americans, who, to do them justice, fought bravely and steadily to the last. Their flight, for such, at first, it certainly was, speedily assumed the aspect of an orderly retreat; and they quitted, rather than fled from, a well-contested field.

CHAPTER IX.

THOUGH successful at every point, and perfectly aware that they were so, it can hardly be said that their present victory produced any very remarkable effect upon the spirits of the British troops. It was a new feature in the war for the rebels to become the assailants, and their armies to meet ours in the open field, rivals for glory; nor was there a man amongst us who appeared not perfectly to feel that such a step would not have been taken, were not their numbers much more formidable than our most liberal calculations had led us to expect. Again, though undeniably foiled in all their efforts, the rebels had fought like men who possessed confidence in themselves. There was no longer that deference for discipline, which in the earlier campaigns distinguished them; leading them to regard themselves as totally inadequate to meet a regular force, except under cover of an enclosed country, or in the rear of intrenchments. On thecon trary, their militia, vying with the continentals, had left behind them all the shelter which the woodlands might have furnished; and marching boldly up to the teeth both of English and German grenadiers, engaged them muzzle to muzzle, and occasionally hand to hand. These facts tended to prove, that the moral superiority which we had hitherto been accustomed to evince, was no more,—and hence that our future successes must arise out of the superior skill of our leaders, not less than from the trained valour of our inferior officers and men.

But it was not on these accounts alone, influential as they doubtless were, that most of us felt disposed to regard the late affair in the light rather of a misadventure than a victory. Our loss in killed and wounded was tremendous. Upwards of five hundred men, including some of the most promising officers in the army, had fallen; and that, too, to purchase nothing more than a little empty honour. Among the number of slain was poor Jones, the destined husband of Miss Macrea. Though he never held up his

head from the moment when his mistress's murder was communicated to him, and declined all intercourse even with the most beloved of his former friends, Jones was too much of a soldier ever to neglect his duty because of the pressure of private grief. Wherever his post might be, there was he sure to be found; and to the last he remained, in heart and affections, as warmly devoted as ever to the cause which he had espoused. It was, indeed, abundantly evident, that to him, life possessed no further attractions. Unless unavoidably hindered by other matters, he took part in every skirmish, exposing himself with the greatest deliberation to the enemy's fire; and to-day he met the fate which no man can doubt that he had long coveted. He fell covered with wounds when defending the guns of which he was in charge, and was found lying beside two Americans, both of whom, in all probability, perished by his hand.

As soon as the firing had totally ceased, and it was ascertained that the enemy had withdrawn, orders were issued for the concentration of our divisions on the field of battle; and the whole army made ready to bivouac on the crest of the hill which had been so long contested. Whilst this was going on, parties went abroad in all directions, to collect such of the wounded as had not been removed during the fray; and the return of these with their melancholy burdens, presented a spectacle upon which no man could look with indifference. Among the number of those thus conveyed to the rear, there was one with whom in the course of service I had become intimately acquainted. It so happened, that the party in charge of him passed the very spot on which, worn out with the exertions of the day, I had lain down to sleep; and the sound of his voice, even in the utterance of a complaint, being recognised, I immediately rose to ascertain whether imagination might not have deceived me. It had not. The mutilated creature thus borne past me was the same with whom I had spent many cheerful hours both by night and day; and compassion for his sufferings getting the better of personal languor, I determined to deprive myself of rest, in order that I might nurse and attend upon him.

It has been already stated, that when the present expedition was first determined upon, such were the notions entertained relative to its facility of accomplishment, that the wives of several officers, some of them encumbered by their children, resolved to follow our fortunes. For a time these ladies travelled in rear of the columns, being conveyed in covered calashes, and tolerably well attended to; and whenever the columns halted, they joined their husbands in camp, and became inmates of tents. But as the season advanced, and the difficulties of the army began to multiply, they kept behind the encampment altogether, and dwelt in huts constructed out of logs, somewhat after the fashion of block-houses. By the passage of the Hudson they were compelled to abandon even their block-houses, and once more share the fate of those most dear to them; and now they had taken refuge in certain farm-houses, scattered in the rear of our lines, from which they became spectators of the bloody contest of which I have just given an account.

It was towards one of these houses that I followed my wounded friend. On entering, I found every room crowded with mangled wretches, whose cries might be distinctly heard many paces from the door; and in the midst of these were several delicate females, whose humane attentions to the poor fellows no words could adequately describe. There sat the Baroness Reidesdel, administering from her slender stock of wine a few drops to a dying soldier, who could thank her only with a glance from his dim eye and a faint movement of his head; and there, too, was the lady of Major Ackland, whose heroic behaviour on an after-occasion has obtained for her an immortality of honourable fame. Even the children, and there were three of Lady Reidesdel's, the eldest of whom could not exceed six years, appeared to be aware that they were thrown into a situation of no ordinary interest; for they either sat in a corner perfectly quiet, or moved after their mother with noiseless tread, as if afraid to jar the nerves of the miserable wounded by the slightest noise.

My friend, who had received several wounds, by one of *which his leg was* dreadfully shattered, was laid upon a little

straw in one corner of an inner apartment. Though extremely weak from loss of blood, he still retained his senses, sufficiently at least to recognise my features as I hung over him; and he showed by the glance of his eye, as well as by an involuntary movement of his lip, that he was grateful for the compassionate feeling which brought me hither. Alas! I could render but slight service to him. I held the bandage, it is true, which the surgeon wrapped round his body; I laved his side with water, and strove by my voice and gestures to inspire him with hope; but I could do nothing effectual to relieve him, and it was very evident he was aware of this. So conscious indeed was he that nothing could save him, that not all the remonstrances of the medical attendant or myself could prevail upon him to keep quiet. He struggled hard to speak; there was something which he manifestly desired to communicate,—but what it was, or to whom it related I know not. Poor fellow! the only words to which he succeeded in giving utterance were,—"My mother," pointing at the same time to his watch: from which I collected that he wished that memento to be conveyed to her: and he died in something less than half an hour from the moment when he was brought to the hospital.

It was still profoundly dark on the morning of the 20th, when the word passed quietly from rank to rank, calling the men to their stations. Day dawned in due time however, and a spectacle was presented to us, of which no man, who has not looked upon the site of a lately fought battle, can form any conception. As far as the eye could reach, the open fields were strewed with broken muskets, hats, caps, pouches, bayonets, balls, and pieces of clothing; whilst here lay a tumbrel or ammunition-waggon, dismounted from its axletree, and there a gun, abandoned and upset, as if to hinder it from being removed. In every direction the grass was trodden down; long and deep tracks of wheels cut the meadow across and across; and at frequent intervals the very soil seemed scorched, as if quantities of gunpowder had been exploded upon it. Nor were other and no less striking manifestations of yesterday's drama wanting. The dead lay around us in heaps; Eng-

lishmen and Americans, men and horses, mingled indiscriminately together: and such had been the desperation of the contest, that in some places the foot of one foeman touched the very head of another. But the most remarkable objects in this horrid panorama, were several American marksmen who hung lifeless among the branches of trees. These persons, who had mounted for the purpose of securing a good aim, and had done considerable execution, wounding among others an aide-de-camp of General Philips whilst in the act of conversing with Burgoyne, soon drew towards themselves a full share of our riflemen's attention. As they furnished admirable marks, and our men were not ignorant how to strike them, very few escaped; and there they still hung, having been caught by the boughs, among which they waved to and fro like the rocking cradles in use among the Indians.

It was General Burgoyne's first business to order out working parties, by whom the dead were collected together, and buried, without distinction of nations, in pits dug to receive them; after which the troops were directed to eat their morning meal preparatory to a fresh movement. The latter occupation being completed, our columns pushed forward, taking a direction rather more to the left; and again halted, a little before noon, within cannon-shot of the enemy's lines. Now, then, for the first time since the opening of the campaign, can the hostile armies be said to have come in presence of one another; and as our positions were somewhat striking, it may not be amiss if I endeavour to give you a tolerably minute description of them.

The Americans, who were now understood to be commanded by General Gates, under whom were Arnold as second, and Sebright as third in command, had strongly intrenched themselves at a place called Stillwater, distant about twelve miles from the Mohawks, and double that space from Albany. Their right, which rested upon the main road, as that did upon the Hudson, was rendered perfectly secure by the presence of a strong redoubt, which would have *required* a series of regular approaches to reduce it; *whilst their* left, besides being covered by close *woods, was protected* by numerous abattis, several breast

works, and a battery for heavy cannon. Along the centre ran a line of field intrenchments, flêches, breastworks, and *radans*, all of them so placed as to be flanked by the fire from the redoubt, or exposed to a cross fire from each other; whilst over the front of the whole was scattered just so much of thicket as to screen the lines themselves from minute inspection, at the same time that it furnished no adequate shelter to an assailing force.

Of the numbers of troops encamped within these lines, it was not easy to form any correct estimate. By some they were rated at twenty thousand, by others at little more than ten thousand men; whilst the truth, as is usual in most cases, probably lay between. But whatever their numbers might be, of one fact we had abundant evidence, that not an hour passed by without bringing in to them some reinforcement. The truth is, that nothing could exceed the spirit of determined resistance which seemed to animate the inhabitants of New England. So far from receiving us, as we had expected to be received, with open arms, they turned out to a man to oppose us, insomuch that General Gates himself was in the end at a loss how to dispose of the multitudes of volunteers that flocked to his standard. It is very true that a countless proportion of these men knew nothing of parade movements; they were undrilled, unaccustomed to the duties of a soldier's life, and some of them destitute even of weapons; but they were, with few exceptions, men of robust frames and brave hearts, and of their skill in the use of fire-arms we had seen enough not to treat it lightly.

At the head of this bold, though undisciplined band, the American general took post at a point which completely cut off all communication by the great road between Saratoga and Albany; and it became incumbent upon us, if we hoped to reach the former place, either to drive him by force from his advantageous ground, or by dexterity of manœuvre to turn him there, and to render his position *untenable.*

To execute one or other of these designs, General Burgoyne *had* under his orders little more than four thousand men. What with losses in the field, the garrisons left be-

hind at the different forts and landing-places, and the escorts required to guard such stores as were from time to time forwarded, our army had gradually diminished, till now it certainly did not exceed, if it came up to, the number just specified. But the worst of the matter was, that even this trifling force could not, in all its parts, be depended upon. I have said, that, from the hour when our rapid advance ceased and their hopes of plunder received a blight, the Indian warriors began gradually to quit us. There remained now scarcely one hundred Red men in the camp; and the Provincials and Canadians soon began to follow their example, deserting by whole sections every night. When we crossed the Hudson, we carried with us something more than four hundred of these auxiliaries;—on the morning of the 19th, barely two hundred were with their colours; and before sunset on the 21st, scarcely fifty men could be found in a fit state to do duty. All this was bad enough,—bad, as it caused a serious diminution to our actual strength, and doubly bad, as it affected our *morale*, by diminishing the confidence of true men. Yet was the army in general far from despairing of success. What alone it seemed to desire, was to be led at once against the enemy; and perhaps it is not going too far to affirm, that had that plan been adopted in proper time, it might have been productive of success.

By what principle General Burgoyne's proceedings were regulated, it is not for me to say. Unwilling to retreat, yet not daring to advance, he adopted that middle course which in perilous circumstances never fails to prove a bad one; and having pushed his columns within gun-shot of his enemy, he unfortunately halted. This was done upon a piece of ground certainly very favourable, as far as any halting-ground could be pronounced favourable in our circumstances; and the general lost no time in adding to the natural strength of his position, by throwing up such works as time and his means would allow. The main body encamped in a line almost parallel to that of the Americans, upon a range of hills called Bræmus's Heights, *extending their left so* far as to command the road and *protect the bateaux*; whilst on certain low grounds

meadows which lay between the river and the hill, the 47th British, the regiment of Hesse Hanau, and the few Provincials who still adhered to us, took post.

As our right was decidedly the weakest point in the line, upon it the greatest care was bestowed by the engineers. Here a redoubt, supported by breastworks and batteries, was erected, the care of the guarding which was intrusted to a German brigade; whilst along the centre, and towards the left, we contented ourselves with throwing up a long mud wall, sufficiently thick to shelter the men against musketry, but hardly competent to resist the violence even of grape. Finally, a chain of outposts was pushed forward, about a quarter of a mile in front of the whole, which, winding round in a rearward direction, secured the right flank, and abundantly protected the lines from being turned.

I am sure that I speak the sentiments of the whole army when I affirm, that no man rejoiced in the appearance of security which these intrenchments created. We did not desire to act on the defensive; we were satisfied that to act thus was to throw away our only chance of success; and hence the erection of works gave us no satisfaction whatever, inasmuch as it portended any thing rather than a bold and immediate advance.

In the construction of these fortifications several days were spent, during which few adventures befel worthy of repetition. On the 21st, indeed, a rumour got abroad, that a messenger from Sir Henry Clinton had arrived, and that he brought intelligence of the preparations which that officer was making to march in force to our relief. On more minute inquiry, I found that the rumour was well-founded. The man had succeeded, by dint of caution, in passing the American lines, taking care to conceal himself in the woods by day and to travel only by night; and he brought with him a communication in cipher, indicating that Fort Montgomery, on the Hudson, would certainly be attacked on the 22d at latest. This was, indeed, a cheering piece of news, to which General Burgoyne failed not to reply, sending back the same person with a correct statement of his own plight, and strongly urging the ne-

cessity of an immediate diversion; and at the same time two officers were despatched with verbal communications to the same effect, and an assurance that he would certainly wait the issue, if he should find it practicable so to do, till the 12th of October. These as well as many others, each of which took a separate route, fell, one after another, into the hands of the enemy; but of that fact we knew nothing at the time, and therefore I am only anticipating the events of my story.

CHAPTER X.

It is not necessary to give any minute detail of the manner in which our time was spent from the 20th of September, when first we assumed our present position, up to the 7th of October. Let it suffice to state, that whilst the ordinary routine of duty went on, whilst pickets were maintained, working-parties sent forth, and parades duly attended to, every day brought stronger and stronger proof that our situation was far from being a desirable one. In the first place, the weather, which had been heretofore tolerably serene, broke; and heavy rains, succeeded by sharp and cutting frosts, were our daily and nightly portion. In the next place, desertions became every hour more and more numerous; even the British soldiers themselves being infected by the criminal inclination, and in too many instances yielding to it. Then, again, sickness was not wanting: agues and intermittent fevers began to make ravages in the ranks; whilst the scanty stock of provisions which we had brought across the Hudson, melted daily away. To such a degree, indeed, were the stores diminished, that on the 3d the general found it necessary to reduce the men's allowance; and we were thenceforth compelled to subsist upon two-thirds, occasionally upon no more than one-half, of the customary ration. Even with this, however, our misfortunes ended not. A thousand terrible rumours came in

to distress us; and, unfortunately, these proved, in very many instances, to be well founded.

The Americans, imboldened by our lengthened inactivity, suddenly began to turn the tables, and to assume the offensive, in a manner to us the most alarming. They did not, indeed, sally from their lines to attack us in front, but they did what was infinitely more galling,—they harassed our convoys, and threatened our communications. Not a morsel of food, nor a barrel of powder, could now be brought from the rear, except by dint of hard fighting on the part of the escorts; and of these not a few were cut off entirely, being waylaid and attacked by a force against which they could offer no adequate resistance. In the mean while, our very depots themselves became exposed to insult, and our strongest forts were threatened. Passing several large detachments across the Hudson, they attacked, almost at the same moment, the landing-place at Lake George, Mount Independence, Fort Edward, and Fort Anne; and so little had these attacks been anticipated, that several of them proved successful. By this means, our depots, a large quantity of boats, many horses, oxen and carriages, with some hundred men, fell into the enemy's hands; and we saw ourselves completely surrounded in a desert country, through which no way could be made, either to the front or rear, except by the sword.

Notwithstanding these numerous reverses, and the privations to which they gave birth, both the general and his troops continued to wait the issue of events with a degree of patience altogether exemplary. The men performed their ordinary duties, if not with alacrity, at all events without complaining; and not a murmur was heard, except when the conversation happened to turn on the probable consequences of these indecisive measures. Among the officers of rank, however, a great deal of anxiety began to show itself. They met together frequently for the purposes of deliberation, some of them making no secret of their dissatisfaction; but the same unsteady course was *pursued* nevertheless, and the same policy persevered in. *At last it* became apparent to every one, that something *decisive must* be attempted before long. Our stock of pro-

visions, which had never been very abundant, was now almost exhausted, and whence to receive a supply no one could tell; whilst the latest hour at which we promised to abide Sir Thomas Clinton's movements was at hand. It was accordingly surmised, that a retreat, or an advance, would be attempted immediately, and every hour gave to the supposition an increased degree of plausibility.

It might be about noon, on the 7th of October, when the light troops, together with General Reidesdel's brigade, and a part of that of General Philips, received orders to form, and march to the right of the camp. The force thus put in motion amounted to barely fifteen hundred men, so cruelly were our numbers diminished by deaths and desertion; but upon what service it was about to be employed none except the generals-in-chief seemed to be aware. That Burgoyne would risk an assault with a corps so inadequate could not for a moment be imagined; yet the rest of the army was left within the lines, strict injunctions having been given that they should not quit their ground, unless expressly commanded to do so.

I am aware that General Burgoyne in his public despatches has represented this manœuvre as one of reconnoissance merely. He was desirous, as he himself states, to ascertain whether the enemy's left could be turned, at the same time that he sufficiently guarded against any attack upon his own position; and it is but fair to believe, that the account of the matter which he has given, is correct. But whether it be so or not, of one thing I am quite certain, that we had scarcely cleared our intrenchments, when we assumed a regular order of battle. Whilst Philips and Reidesdel, each at the head of a separate column, threatened the centre and left of the American lines, our brigade pushed off for the wood, with the design of penetrating, should it be found practicable, into their rear, and alarming them for their communications.

We had proceeded some way, without meeting an enemy, or suffering further inconvenience than the natural inequalities of the ground presented, when our attention was forcibly drawn to the fate of our comrades by a heavy firing of muskets on the left. At first it was loose and irregular,

as if the advanced parties had fallen in with the enemy's pickets, and were engaging them; but it became every moment more and more serious, till at last it increased into a roar. By and by the same sounds were distinctly heard issuing from other quarters of the field, accompanied by repeated and quick discharges of artillery, till at last not a doubt could be harboured that the whole army was sharply engaged, not as assailants, but as defenders.

Our commanding officer instantly called a halt. To have continued his progress at a moment when the lines were threatened, would have been to expose himself to destruction, without causing any advantage to other divisions; so he determined to take ground to the left,—that he might at least ascertain how affairs were going, before he completely and irretrievably committed himself and his party.

A rapid march of half an hour's continuance brought us to a point, from which we could obtain a correct view of the condition in which affairs stood. At the extreme left of our works was a battalion of grenadiers, at the head of which was Major Ackland, upon which a fierce attack was made by a strong body of continentals. By and by, a second corps of Americans threw itself against the Germans, who communicated between the grenadiers and the left of the line; whilst almost at the same time the line itself was not only assailed in front, but threatened by a moving column on its flank. To check the progress of that column, the marksmen, with the light infantry that accompanied them, moved forward, and the 24th regiment coming up soon after, a fierce contest began. Of the changes of ground which now took place, it were vain to attempt any accurate or minute account. All that I recollect of the matter is, that after sustaining a tremendous struggle, the left of our regular line gave way, and the light infantry were in consequence commanded to retreat, and to form again in a certain half-cleared field *en potence*. Here we were furiously assailed by Morgan's riflemen, one of the *most distinguished* regiments in the American service; but we held our ground stoutly, till General Fraser himself rode up, and again directed us to retire.

The truth is, that the enemy had by this time succeeded in overpowering both the right and centre of our columns; which falling back in disorder, left an open space to the Americans by which to enter the intrenched camp. General Fraser no sooner beheld how matters were going, than, quitting his own charge, he galloped off towards us, and joining us to the 24th regiment, which still retained its ranks, he led us briskly towards the point which was already all but won by the rebels. We succeeded in getting there before them, and drove them back from the very base of the parapet at the bayonet's point; but it was at the expense of one of the most valuable lives in this army, if not in the service at large. General Fraser had just enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing his skilful movement crowned with success, when a musket-ball pierced his side, and he fell mortally wounded into the arms of one of the men. He was instantly carried to the rear, leaving it as his last request, that he would on no account abandon the works, but defend them whilst a man remained alive, or a single cartridge continued in our pouches.

Nothing dismayed, though universally grieved at the fall of this gallant officer, our people continued to maintain themselves with so much obstinacy, that the enemy were at last fain to desist, and withdrew to the distance of about half a mile from our front. Unhappily, however, the same obstinate determination not to be forced, was not shown at every point in the line. A corps of Brunswickers, at the head of which was Colonel Breyman, being attacked in their intrenchments, gave way almost at the first fire; and though covered not only by a breastwork, but by a row of stout palisades, they abandoned both, and fled in extreme confusion. The Americans were not slow in taking advantage of the panic. Desisting from further efforts against the grenadiers, as well as against ourselves, they poured in great force through the opening thus made; and the wings of our army were in consequence cut off from all communication one with another. Several attempts were indeed made to recover the lost ground. Colonel Breyman, rallying his Brunswickers, did his best to cheer them forward, and led them so far as to receive a well-directed volley from

the rebels; but that volley taking effect upon himself well as upon almost all the bravest of his officers, the r ment again broke, and no efforts of other leaders succe in restoring order.

It was, perhaps, a fortunate matter for us, at a junc so critical as the present, that the increasing darkness c pelled the enemy to refrain from following up their ad tages. So complete was the confusion into which mos our regiments were thrown, that the consequence another attack might have been fatal; for besides tha had lost many of our best men and officers, the survi were universally ignorant, not only of the fate of t comrades, but, I had almost said, of their own. That Americans had carried our works, soon became gene understood; and as none could tell where they had p trated, or how far they had proceeded, no one rightly k whether to regard himself in the light of a prisoner the reverse. Besides, the regiments were all broken dispersed from their own officers; officers were separ from their own men; and the utmost confusion preva every where. When the firing ceased, we accordingly down, each man where he stood, without respect to pers and of the fate which might await them when the morr sun arose, all were as ignorant, as many were perfe indifferent.

Such was our condition (I speak at present of the l corps to which I was personally attached), when a messen arrived from General Burgoyne, directing that we sh change our position, by a route which he was commissio to point out. Our people stood instantly to their arms, preserving a silence the most profound, passed rapidly, in tolerable order, to the rear. By and by, we reached stream on the banks of which I had a few weeks sustained a skirmish; and crossing it by the bridge, soon found that the army was in full retreat. But retreat was not of long continuance. Having attained height on which our camp formerly stood, we ascertai that there all the rest of the brigade had assembled; piling our arms, we made ready to pass the night.

Having nothing eatable in my havresack, nor any th

except water with which to quench my thirst, I had thrown myself down by the side of a fire, with the design of forgetting at once present troubles and future cares in sleep; when my kinsman Fraser, whom, since the American last withdrew, I had not seen, suddenly stood beside me. "You must rise," said he; "this is no time for repose, and the general has need of you."

I rose instantly, and prepared to accompany him. We walked on without exchanging a syllable, till we arrived at the identical house where, after the action of the 19th, my poor friend expired; and on entering, I found that the scene which it presented on the present occasion, was not very different from that which it had presented then. Multitudes of wounded and dying men crowded every apartment, through the midst of whom we made our way till we gained a low door at the extremity of a long passage where we halted. The door was ajar, and Fraser pulling me softly by the sleeve, made a motion that I should look in. I did so, and beheld standing in the centre of the room a group of persons whom I instantly recognised as General Burgoyne, Reidesdel, Philips, and Hamilton. A map was lying beside them on a table, which they appeared to examine with great anxiety; though no one spoke a word for several minutes. Fraser again made a signal to keep quiet; it was obeyed, and by and by the following deeply interesting conversation began.

"Then you persist in believing that he may yet arive in time?" observed General Philips, resuming, as it seemed some topic which had been already discussed.

"Unquestionably," replied Burgoyne; "I cannot and will not believe, that Clinton is capable of violating his promise. He knows that our very existence depends upon the vigour of his movements; and rely upon it, that he will not be slow to succour us. We have nothing left for it but to maintain ourselves where we are a few days longer, and trust to his exertions for the rest."

General Philips, though evidently chagrined, only shrugged up his shoulders, and was silent; but the Baron Reidesdel taking up the discourse, exclaimed in broken English, "By Gar, General Burgoyne, if you go on thus

waiting and waiting, and doing noting, we shall all be cut to pieces, and den no man will be able to save us. Whatfor not go on, or go off at once?"

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," answered Burgoyne in manifest agitation, "it is all very well for you, on whose heads no responsibility rests, to talk of acting with decision, and doing this or that on the spur of the moment. In God's name, how are we to retreat? in God's name, how can we advance? Is not Gates before us with twelve thousand men, flushed with this day's success, and receiving hourly reinforcements? Are not the forts in our rear taken, the opposite bank of the river guarded, our bridge no longer secure, and our provisions expended? Will any of you tell me that this army, worn out with past exertions, and dispirited from defeat, is capable of acting on the offensive? Is it conceivable that, were we to commence a retrogression this moment, we should ever reach Canada? It is absolute madness to think of moving at all. Upon this ground must we conquer or die; at least we must maintain ourselves here, till Clinton comes to deliver us."

The above was spoken with so much vehemence, that the rest of the generals saw the inutility of attempting a reply. They only looked at one another in silence; till at last, Hamilton renewed the conversation by asking how it was proposed to make Sir Henry acquainted with the extreme peril of our situation. "You have despatched messenger after messenger," continued he, "not one of whom, as far as we know, has ever reached his destination. Is it wise, or proper to follow up a system which, without bringing benefit upon the army at large, causes the destruction of so many individuals?"

"There is one resource left," replied Burgoyne, "to which, though I use it with reluctance, it has become necessary to have recourse. I do not think it will fail me; and if my expectations prove well-grounded, then are we safe."

"Name it!" exclaimed the generals in a breath.

"There, gentlemen, you must excuse me," replied Burgoyne. "In this instance, so much must depend upon *the* prudence of the agent, that it were unfair towards him

to create additional difficulties, by extending my confidence to any besides himself."

"Then why are we here?" asked Philips, angrily. "It is a mere mockery of a council of war, first of all to consult us, and then neither to adopt our sentiments, nor offer reason for their rejection. For my own part I wash my hands of all consequences, be they what they may!"

"I called you together, sir," observed Burgoyne, "with no view whatever of seeking to share with you the responsibility which I alone must bear. Neither have I solicited your advice in any thing. I simply wished to make you acquainted with my own resolutions, and the causes which led to them. I consider it better, on every account, to abide the chances of a few days longer, than to rush headlong upon certain destruction; for let me remind you, that a great deal more depends upon us than a mere regard to our own preservation. From the first, ours has been a force hazarded; circumstances may occur to render its sacrifice essential. Are we not a subsidiary corps, and nothing else,—an army of diversion merely? Suppose, then, we did retire at once; and, though the matter is by no means probable, succeeded in reaching Canada;—might not the safety of New York be compromised? No, no. Whilst the faintest hope of successful resistance continues, we must not permit Gates to detach a single man to reinforce Washington;—therefore, I say again, that nothing remains for us except to abide where we are, till the effects of a plan, of the miscarriage of which I entertain little dread, be ascertained."

Whether the tone in which this was uttered satisfied them that remonstrance was useless, or whether they were disgusted by the manner in which their advices had been received, I do not know; but Burgoyne no sooner ceased to speak, than his council withdrew. They retired through a door opposite to that behind which we were standing; and they had no sooner done so, than we entered. The general started, but, recognising us instantly, held out his hand to my conductor, and exclaimed, "Ah, Fraser, how I rejoice to see you! You at least can feel for my situation: and what a situation it is! Without a hope of victory, with

hardly a chance of escape, how am I to act, or where to turn? If I request advice or assistance from them, cast in my teeth that my own indecision has brought all these misfortunes; yet not one among them ha candour to speak out, when my proceedings were, wha pleased to term, dilatory, and my councils wavering. even now, God alone can tell whether I act rightly. haps I ought to regard the matter as hopeless, and r at once, whilst yet there is a chance of finding the b entire, and the opposite bank unoccupied."

"I am afraid, sir," replied Fraser, "that you have al gone too far to recede. To-night, no movement eitl the front or rear could be made, without sacrificing wounded, and abandoning all your stores; and to-mc if the enemy be the men that I take them for, we have other work upon our hands. Permit me to add wise, that this is no time for indecision. You have declared to the generals your determination of abidin result where you are; you must not supply them wi additional handle against you, by revoking that det nation, at least immediately."

"Then you overheard our deliberations?" aske general.

"In part I did," replied Fraser, "though only in p

"I am glad of it," exclaimed Burgoyne; "for yc least, will do me justice, let the result be what it You can testify how cruelly I have been thwarted, barbarously browbeaten, at a moment when above all c unity of counsels was required. Oh, Fraser, if you your own peace of mind, never listen to the whisp ambition. No man can tell the miseries of comman he has experienced them,—no man."

"But your plan, sir," said Fraser, interrupting him anxious, as far as might be, to conceal his agitation me: "it is high time to think of that; and here is messenger, ready and willing to execute your orde perish in the attempt."

"True, true," said the general, "I had forgotten If it succeed, we may yet escape the toils;—but tha *Fraser!*"

"It must succeed," exclaimed Fraser; "it cannot fail of success, provided only it be acted upon immediately. But there ought to be no further wavering; let the young man receive his instructions, and set forth on the instant,"

The general paused, as if to consider this proposal, the varying expression of his countenance bearing testimony to the wavering nature of his thoughts. "The plan must be followed up," said he at length, "but not with unnecessary precipitation. Mr. Macdirk must pass over under the eyes of both armies, and that can be done only in the day. It were madness, moreover, to set out upon so critical an adventure till the position of the enemy's posts has been ascertained; and the delay of one day more can do no great harm. Besides, the Americans may think fit to offer us battle again to-morrow, and success on our parts would render the step altogether unnecessary. Not a word, Fraser," continued he, observing that my relative was preparing to remonstrate; "my mind is fully made up; he shall not set out to-night. And now, gentlemen, to supper. Whatever my stock affords shall be laid before you; for myself, I must go forth and see how matters proceed in the camp."

The general waited not for a reply, but immediately withdrew.

"There goes as good and as brave, and withal as ambitious a man," exclaimed Fraser, "as any in the British army; yet no more fit to hold a separate command than the meanest sentinel who serves under him. That he possesses talent of a high order, all the world knows:—he is eloquent, humane, and as a second unrivalled; but responsibility is a load under which he cannot bear up, and hence all his natural abilities go for nothing. What a career of glory was before him, had he possessed nerve enough to follow it up; and now God grant that both he and his army become not, in the end, objects of compassion to their friends, and of triumph to their enemies! But let us adjourn to my tent. I know that the poor man fares as hardly as any soldier in the line. There is something left behind, I believe, in my canteen; let us conse umthat, and spare his scanty stock."

He turned as he spoke towards the door, and I followed him with the intention of being his guest for the night, both at bed and board.

CHAPTER XI.

We had arrived at the entrance-hall, and were preparing to quit the house, when the sound of female voices, one in evident distress, arrested our attention. We paused, irresolute whether to enter the chamber from which the weeping proceeded, or to pass on at once to Fraser's quarters, when the door was suddenly opened, and the Baroness Reidesdel presented herself. She instantly recognised Fraser, and begged him, "for God's sake, come in;—for I am in a sad plight!" continued she. "Here is poor General Fraser dying in one corner of my room, and Lady Harriet Ackland frantic for the loss of her husband in another; besides a number of unfortunate gentlemen, all more or less severely wounded, thrown in a great measure upon my attentions."

There was no resisting this appeal; so we followed our conductress, to become witnesses of a scene the recollection of which is not likely ever to pass from my memory. In a small chamber, the earthen floor of which was but scantily covered with straw, lay seven officers, two of whom, the German Colonel Breyman and our gallant brigadier, were already in the agonies of death. The colonel, whose wound was in the head, appeared to suffer no pain; a heavy breathing alone, with an occasional quiver of the lip, giving testimony that life had not departed. The general groaned audibly, like one in acute torture; and spoke from time to time with the strong voice of a man whose sufferings promised to endure many hours, though death must in the end remove them. He had received a musket-ball in the side, which passed completely through the body, rupturing the stomach in its progress; and he now lingered on, a martyr

to pangs as violent as such a wound was calculated to produce. Nearly opposite to him sat, or rather reclined, Lady Harriet Ackland, on the end of a couch, her face buried in her handkerchief, and sobbing audibly; whilst the Baroness Reidesdel's children were lying, like seraphs in the midst of carnage, sound asleep upon the other. Major Ackland, it appeared, had been wounded in the late action, as common rumour reported, mortally: at all events he had fallen into the hands of the Americans, and was now a prisoner.

It would be hard to determine which of these persons appeared most deserving of compassion. The wounded men were doubtless suffering, many of them, all that the body can endure of torture; but Lady Harriet's was an agony of mind, in comparison of which the most acute bodily pain were trifling.

"I must go to him," cried she; "wherever he is, and whatever his fate may be, I must share it. The rebels cannot be so inhuman as to refuse permission to a miserable wife, to attend the bed of her dying husband. Oh, God, that I could but see him!—one word, one look of his, would be to me a consolation the most unspeakable."

It was in vain that the baroness used every soothing and consolatory expression which a compassionate heart could dictate, appealing to us, as to persons well acquainted with the truth, to confirm her assurances of the major's safety. Like Rachel weeping for her children, Lady Harriet refused to be comforted; and though we were not scrupulous in passing the rigid line of truth in a cause so holy, even our asseverations were thrown away upon her. Every moment during which she was absent from her wounded husband seemed an age; and at last it was agreed upon amongst us, that to offer further opposition would be useless. Though extremely delicate at the best, and at present far advanced in pregnancy, she determined to brave all the hazards of the night, and the enemy, and, throwing a loose cloak about her shoulders, to make her way, as she best could, within the American lines. One consideration, and one only, induced her to pause for a few moments. It was suggested that a letter of recommendation from General

Burgoyne to General Gates would at least secure for her civil treatment at the outposts; and as Fraser volunteered to procure that letter, she consented to remain where she was till he should return.

Whilst the unhappy lady sat in a state of comparative calmness, the attention of all present was painfully turned to General Fraser, who retained even to the last moment the feeling of the soldier and the gentleman. Though racked with bodily pain, he looked up from time to time only to express his sorrow that he should thus intrude upon the baroness, and his sense of her extreme kindness; and then his thoughts seemed to wander to other scenes, and the name of his wife rose, as it were, involuntarily to his lips. "Oh, fatal ambition!" cried he, "of what happiness hast thou robbed me! Alas! my poor wife,—who will comfort her when she hears of this?—and my children,—God, be their guardian! To thee, and to my country I commend them." Then suddenly changing his theme, he exclaimed, "Poor Burgoyne! tell him that I felt for him even in my dying moments; and say, that I made it my last request to be buried at six o'clock in the evening, in the redoubt which crowns the hill on our right. It is a foolish wish; but I fancy that I shall sleep soundly there, because my brave fellows built it, and will, I am sure, maintain it." All this was spoken calmly, resolutely, and in the tone of one aware of his situation; and if there occasionally broke from him some hasty expression, no one could doubt that it arose from reason being enfeebled by bodily pain. Poor fellow! he lingered on till eight o'clock in the morning, and then fell asleep in death.

In the mean while, Fraser had not been neglectful of the charge assigned to him, nor Burgoyne backward in furnishing the letter of recommendation to the American general. The former returned in as short a space as could have been expected, with the document in question; but the lady's grief again assumed the most distressing appearance, when he assured her that to pass the line of advanced sentries this night was impracticable. The safety of the whole army required, that for the present no intelligence of its change

of ground should reach the Americans; and hence the most positive orders had been issued, that no one, on any pretence whatever, should quit the camp.

Of the issue of this lady's interesting story, a few words will suffice to remind you. Having waited with exemplary patience till a late hour on the following day, she was forwarded with a flag of truce, and embarking in an open boat rowed by two common sailors, proceeded down the river. Torrents of rain descended, from which alone, under other circumstances, she would have shrunk; but at present her whole soul was engrossed by one idea only, and she pushed on, reaching the point of her destination at ten o'clock at night. Fortunately for her, the American outpost in front of which she presented herself, was commanded by a brave and generous officer, Major Dearborn; who received her with all the deference due to her rank, and furnished her with such accommodations as his hut afforded. She remained there till the morrow, her anxiety being in some degree relieved by his assurances that her husband's wounds were not serious; and she finally reached the American head-quarters in safety, where the utmost kindness was shown to her. The flattering accounts which she received of Major Ackland's condition, proved to be well-founded. He had been shot through both legs, but was doing well; and he returned with his amiable and heroic wife to England, as soon as the army of which he formed a part obtained its liberty. But to return to my own narrative.

Having spent some hours with the Baroness Reidesdel, and done our best to comfort both her and those about her, Fraser and myself adjourned to our original place of destination, the tent of the former. It was but a cheerless habitation, destitute of every thing which the common world calls comforts; yet we entered it with a feeling not greatly removed from satisfaction, inasmuch as we found in it at least a place of temporary refuge from scenes harrowing to the best feelings of our nature.

"This is a cold welcome, Macdirk," said Fraser; "yet it is the best that I can give. I believe there still remains a morsel or two of salt junk, with a pint of rum, or there-

abouts; and since we cannot command better, why we must be content with what we have." So saying, he ordered his servant to produce the viands; and though they were coarse enough, Heaven knows, and far from being superabundant, we were too thankful for any means of allaying the cravings of hunger, to experience or express the slightest dissatisfaction with our fare.

Our scanty meal being finished, we naturally entered into conversation touching the state of the army, and the prospects both of it in general, and of ourselves in particular. "Perilous as your undertaking is," observed my companion, "I am by no means sure, that it is not, after all, an enviable one. It is true, that you run some risks. A single imprudent act or hasty expression will betray you, and in that case your death is unavoidable. But your imprudence must be extreme indeed, if it lead to this; and then, should you succeed, how great will be your reward! On our side, again, what is there to cheer or enliven? Twice foiled in action, destitute of provisions, stores, and resources, harassed on all sides by flying bodies of the enemy, and commanded by men who know not their own minds for an hour; to what can we look forward, except to fresh disasters, and in the end, perhaps, to a shameful capitulation? Even your mission, on which I have hitherto counted so much will, I am satisfied, lead to nothing. No, no, the happy moment has escaped us, and no exertions, however spirited, can now bring it back."

"Then why not say so to the general at once?" asked I.

"Because such an opinion coming from me, would deprive him of all self-command. Besides, things may fall out in our favour, of which we dream not at present; and whilst the shadow of a chance remains, Burgoyne must be supported."

"And supported at the expense of my honour, certainly," said I,—"perhaps of my life."

"Your honour runs no risk," replied he, "whilst you act in obedience to your chief's orders; your life, as I have already observed, is in your own keeping."

"But why pursue this wild scheme, if things really be, as *you represent* them, hopeless? Why not try what an

Indian can do? nay, more, why not allow me an Indian for my guide? and I will set off cheerfully on the instant. It is to the pretended desertion, and to it alone, that I object."

"Will your objections cease to operate, if I lay before you convincing proofs that there is not an Indian attached to the army, who is not a traitor?

I replied, that such conviction would certainly go far towards allaying my scruples, and reconciling me to any thing.

"Then your scruples will not long torment you," said he. "You have observed a remarkable warrior in the general's suite,—one Eagleswing, as he calls himself, a chief of the Six Nations."

I recollected him perfectly; indeed, it was impossible, having seen that man once, ever after to forget him. Among a people celebrated for the exact symmetry of their persons, Eagleswing deserved to be pronounced positively handsome. Tall, graceful, formed for feats both of agility and strength, he possessed a countenance endowed with an expression of singular acuteness, and an eye which, whilst it shunned the gaze of the individual on whom it was turned, seemed to read his very thoughts, and penetrate his most secret wishes. From the opening of the campaign, he had attached himself, in a remarkable manner, to the person of the general, to whose interests he professed and appeared to be devoted; and his influence among his countrymen being allowed to be very great, the general scrupled not to bestow upon him a large portion of his confidence. Of this no secret was made; indeed the general himself spoke openly of the Indian as one of the most useful functionaries in the army. But there were not wanting persons who viewed the Red Warrior with an eye of strong suspicion; and now for the first time I learned, that my relative was of the number.

"Are you aware," continued he, "that all our messengers, not one of whom has succeeded, went under the guidance of an Indian recommended by that person? This may amount to no charge against him I allow; yet, is it not singular, that our plans should have been so aptly

frustrated this morning; I know that Eagleswing was made acquainted with them."

"What you say," replied I, "affords strong ground of suspicion, doubtless; but suspicion is not proof. You promised me proof of the Indian's treachery—let me have it."

"On more accounts than one, I will at least make the attempt," replied he. "Take this rifle," handing me at the same time a short fusee, and arming himself with another. "Your dirk is, I see, in your belt; now follow, and do as I do, without asking a question."

He rose as he spoke, and we sallied from the tent.

I was at no loss to conjecture that our expedition was both a secret and a hazardous one; nor did any great space of time elapse ere I discovered its object. Instead of passing openly through the camp, or along the line of advanced sentries, we struck off directly towards the rear till we had passed head-quarter house, when we turned suddenly to the right, and made for the point where the Indian huts were established. As we approached these, a double share of caution was necessary. Though it is not customary among the savages to preserve a regular watch in their encampments, I need scarcely say, that he who seeks to traverse them unobserved, must adopt every imaginable expedient to shun observation; for their acuteness of sense surpasses every thing of which a European can form a conception, and the slightest noise is almost sure to be overheard. With the habits of Indians, however, Fraser was familiarly acquainted. He squatted down as soon as he had arrived within a certain distance of their tents, making a motion to me to follow his example; and our approaches were thenceforth made slowly, silently, and painfully, not upon our hands and knees, but upon our bellies. In this manner we dragged ourselves over the surface of the ground at a rate so tardy, as to be ourselves scarcely aware that we made any progress, till we reached the exterior of a tent, detached from the rest, within which it was easy to perceive that several persons were assembled. Fraser touched my arm, as a signal to keep perfectly still, but to be ready for all chances; and then gently raising one corner of the

canvass, all that was within became in a moment perceptible.

We saw before us a group of five or six savages, conspicuous among whom was Burgoyne's confidant. They were seated round a dull fire, smoking with all the composure for which Red men are remarkable; and for many minutes after we had attained our stations, a profound silence reigned among them. At last Eagleswing spoke. As he addressed his companions in the language of his tribe, his speech was to me without meaning; but I could perceive from the involuntary pressure of my companion's elbow against my side, that he perfectly understood it. Well pleased with this, I lay quite still, looking with intense interest at the scene before me; and truly it were not easy to conceive one more remarkable, or more worthy of a master's pencil to represent it. The persons before us were all bedizened with the war-paint, which gave to their naturally savage countenances an expression absolutely ferocious. A loose cotton scarf, thrown carelessly over one shoulder, and twisted round the loins, so as to cover half the upper limb, formed the only garment which sheltered them from the influence of weather; for the mocassins, in which their feet and ankles were wrapped, were intended rather to shield them in the rough passes of the forests, than to protect them from cold or wet. Their heads, again, bald, except at the crown, were left wholly exposed, except that a bunch of feathers barbarously surmounted the knot of long lank hair in which they prided themselves. They sat upon the ground, each man's tomahawk and rifle laid carefully beside him, and their attitude was illustrative at once of extreme indolence, and the capability of assuming in a moment its very opposite. A profound silence reigned whilst Eagleswing spoke, the pipes being laid aside that nothing might call off attention; and when he concluded, an obscure sound, resembling rather the snort of a horse than any thing else in nature, gave assurance that his address had been well received. This was hint enough to Fraser. Once more he pressed against my side with his elbow, and letting the curtain fall gently, began to steal silently to the rear. I followed his example, and in a few moments we

were sufficiently removed from the hut to permit of his speaking.

"Thank God! Macdirk," said he in a low whisper, "that we took this precaution. There is no room for explanation now; but follow me, and whatever you see me attack, be sure to aid me in destroying it. The scoundrel shall be taken in his own snare, or I am not the man I used to be."

Without waiting for a reply, Fraser set off at a rapid pace; and I kept up with him, surprise itself being scarcely allowed to operate, so abrupt and unaccountable seemed to me the whole series of operations.

A few minutes' walk brought us to an open thicket, considerably in advance of the camp, and, as the light of the stars enabled me to distinguish, above half-musket-shot from the right flank of the redoubt. At the edge of the thicket stood a sentry, who challenged as we approached; but Fraser instantly squatting, caused me to do the same, and we lay motionless, and almost breathless, for several seconds. By and by the man, whose attention had evidently been attracted, began to relax from his attitude of watchfulness. Casting a careful glance around, and seeing nothing, he once more shouldered his arms, and turning to his left, began to walk backwards and forwards, as he had previously done, on his post. We took care not to neglect the opportunity thus furnished. Advancing in the same quiet way in which we had approached the Indians' tent, we succeeded, after sundry pauses, in gaining the wood; and diverging as near to the soldier as prudence would allow, we lay down,—why, or for what purpose, I knew not.

We had maintained this attitude rather more than half an-hour,—on my part in a state of mute astonishment, on the part of Fraser in breathless anxiety,—when the attention of both was suddenly drawn to the rear, by a low, confused, and most unearthly noise. That which roused us was not lost upon the sentry, who did as he had done when we were approaching. He halted, and challenged; but in the present instance he appeared even more speedily satisfied than formerly, for almost immediately after he resume

his walk. It was now our turn to be on the alert, and we were so. We looked abroad, and beheld a huge bear, moving slowly along the skirt of the thicket, and edging, as it were, by degrees and in short circles towards the soldier. At this instant Fraser pulled me by the coat, as if desirous that I should be prepared to act. Now the bear stood still, and now the sentinel in the ordinary course of his beat approached it, when my companion slowly unsheathed his hunting-knife, and gathered himself up for a spring. I had no time to form so much as a guess respecting his design, when all at once he rushed from his ambuscade, and the next instant was engaged in a close and desperate struggle with the animal whose extraordinary movements we had heen watching. It was speedily ended. Before I could arrive to his assistance, he pierced the monster with many stabs, which, uttering a shrill cry, fell dead at his feet, and displayed the figure, not of a real bear, but of an Indian artfully disguised in the skin of a less savage animal. You will readily believe that my astonishment at this discovery was great, whilst the amazement of the sentry, who immediately recognised his officer, was not less so; but the secret was soon disclosed, and it proved to be one of the first importance.

For some time back, such of our sentinels as occupied detached and lonely stations, had been observed to disappear in a very unaccountable manner. That the men had not deserted, we had the evidence, in many cases, of their own excellent characters, in all of the positions of their posts, for believing. It was not in our advanced chain that this occurred, from which, if desertion were the object, it might most easily be attained; but invariably in solitary spots; usually in the rear, or on the flank of the camp, and always within the compass of our own ground. Numerous were the efforts made to account for the circumstance, all of which had hitherto proved unavailing. If two men mounted together, nothing of the kind occurred; if a patrol lay up in ambush, they discovered nothing, except occasionally a bear prowling near them; but as sure as one man took upon himself the duty, so sure was he never to return. This happened so frequently, that at last men became timid

of mounting; nor could any but the bravest and best soldiers be persuaded to face a danger which they believed to be supernatural.

Our adventure this night unravelled the whole mystery. This bear, which had been seen so frequently, proved to be one of Eagleswing's followers, by whose tomahawk man after man had fallen; and who, but for our opportune visit to the tent of his chief, might have pursued his bloody career to the close of the campaign.

"I told you," said Fraser to me, "that there was not an Indian in the camp who would be found, on examination, honest in any particular; and here is proof enough that I was not mistaken; but this is not all. Let us first cast this carrion where its companions may not be likely to find it, and then, as we return home, I will convince you, that if the army is to be saved at all, it must be saved by you."

As he spoke, we seized the Indian by the legs, and, the sentinel lending his assistance, we soon dragged him into a close part of the thicket. That done, we left the man to his meditations, and following a course as tortuous as that which we had pursued in setting out, we arrived in due time, and in perfect safety, at the tent.

Of the conversation which followed, a few words will suffice to make you acquainted with the substance. The speech which we had overheard, and which was the cause of our extraordinary movements, contained, it appeared, nothing more than hints of some deep-laid scheme of treachery, the full object of which Fraser had been unable to discover, but to which the murder of the sentry, and the passage of the scout to the enemy's camp, were to be the preludes.

"And now," continued he, "as you professed your readiness to desert in the event of these men being found unfaithful, it remains for me only to hold you to your promise. For once, I believe that Burgoyne has acted prudently. I could not gather that the Red-skins know any thing of this device, and therefore we may rest tolerably secure that it will not be thwarted; though every thing will depend upon yourself. But it is high time to think of seeking repose To you, and probably to me, to-morrow will be a day of no

common exertion; it were a pity to enter upon it with minds and bodies enfeebled by too much watchfulness."

He drew his cloak around him as he spoke, and with as much coolness as if nothing out of the ordinary routine of events had occurred, threw himself at length upon the ground. Though in no degree affected by the drowsiness of which he complained, I instinctively followed his example; and in a few minutes a heavy breathing convinced me that he was in a state of absolute forgetfulness.

CHAPTER XII.

Being now left entirely to my own reflections, you will not be surprised to learn, that these gradually assumed a character which, in spite of a strong sense of bodily fatigue, effectually hindered sleep from visiting my eyelids. It appeared to me as if the events of the past day, more particularly the occurrences of the last hour, were the mere creatures of a disordered fancy—dreams worked out in the fever of a morning's sleep, not realities involving the most important future consequences. The scene in the hospital, the countenance of Eagleswing, the assembly of savages, with the subsequent deed of blood, all forced themselves in the most grotesque and hideous manner back on my recollection, till I almost doubted whether I were not even now in a trance, from which it would be a relief of no ordinary kind to awake. Then again, the thought of what to-morrow might bring forth, was not without its influence. I felt myself pledged to an undertaking than which I well knew that none could be devised more hazardous; and there were moments when my resolution wavered, almost to sinking, under the prospect. More than once I was tempted to repair to the general's quarters for the purpose of retracting the consent which I had given. But the recollection that my honour was engaged, that my future prospects depended on myself, and that a shrinking back now would

effectually ruin them for ever, these considerations served again to steel me. Wearied out at length by so many distracting considerations, I determined to think no more; and I closed my eyes firmly together, as if the shutting out of all external objects would assist in dispersing a host of painful ideas. But my efforts proving useless, I ceased to make them, and rising in a sort of desperation, walked forth.

The night, which had hitherto been calm and clear began now to assume a lowering and threatening appearance. Dark clouds were gathering in the sky, and a low moaning of wind, the prelude to a storm, came up sullenly and hoarsely from the south. I cannot tell why these circumstances should have produced the smallest effect upon me; but certain it is, that I experienced a positive relief from them. It appeared as if the tumult in my own mind had unfitted me from looking upon outward nature, except in a state of uproar; and as the wind became every moment more and more boisterous, my agitation gradually subsided. I walked about for a full hour watching the progress of the storm; and I retired at last to enjoy a sound and refreshing slumber, which the rushing of the heavy rain, and the boisterous roar of a tempest contributed largely to produce.

Though the storm continued to rage with unabated fury the troops, as is customary in such situations, got under arms an hour before dawn; but instead of returning to the line as soon as the day broke, they merely piled their arms and continued on the watch. The truth is, that the enemy no sooner ascertained the evacuation of our more advanced camp, than they possessed themselves of it; pushing forward parties within musket-shot of our new alignement, between which and our pickets, as well as between several batteries on each side, an irregular fire of musketry and cannon ensued. For what purpose this desultory tirailladé was kept up, it would be hard to say. On our parts, indeed, it was merely a measure of defence; for our men never fired till compelled to do so by the audacity of the assailants, and ceased again as soon as the latter withdrew but the Americans persisted all day in drawing on useless skirmishes, which cost a few valuable lives both to themselves and us, without producing any important result. To

wards evening, however, both parties appeared to grow weary of so unprofitable a waste of amunition. The enemy, having vainly striven to drive in a post which General Burgoyne exhibited a firm determination to maintain, all at once ceased their hostilities; and from that hour till after nightfall, no firing beyond a distant and random cannonade took place.

Things were in this state when Burgoyne, to whom the last wish of General Fraser had been communicated, issued orders for the assembling of a party to carry that wish into execution. As it was a matter of some moment not to attract greater notice from the Americans than might be, the troops provided for the melancholy ceremony were few in number; Fraser's marksmen only, with a few companies of light infantry, being employed on that service. We began to muster about half-past five, at the door of the house where the gallant brigadier lay; and in a quarter of an hour after, his body, wrapped up in a sheet, and covered with a horseman's cloak, was brought out upon a rude bier constructed for the purpose. Four serjeant-majors belonging to his own division were the bearers, whose moistened eyes and dejected countenances gave testimony to the sorrow that reigned within; and the mourners were Generals Burgoyne, Philips, Reidesdel, and Hamilton, with many others of the highest rank attached to the army.

As soon as the body appeared, the word was given to move; and a slow and mournful procession began, a few muffled drums beating the dead march, and an occasional low flourish of trumpets sounding; till, having gained the base of the hill on the summit of which the redoubt stood, the troops opened by sign to the right and left, and the bier with its attendants went forward. At the head of this party walked Mr. Brudenel, the respectable chaplain-general of the army, who faltered forth in broken voice the words, "I am the resurrection and the life;" till having reached the point where the grave had been dug, a general halt took place. Nothing could exceed at this moment the mournful solemnity of the scene. In the midst of a furious tempest of wind and rain, and surrounded by men whom he had often led to victory, was the gallant Fraser

committed to the dust; and as if these accompaniments alone had not been sufficiently impressive for the occasion, another was speedily granted. The enemy, who had planted a battery upon a height immediately opposite to the redoubt, ignorant, no doubt, of the cause of the assembly, no sooner beheld a crowd of persons together, than they opened a heavy fire upon us. The balls struck repeatedly into the mound of soil at the edge of the grave, casting dirt into the faces both of the clergyman and his auditors, whilst the wild whistling of the gale replied in melancholy cadence to the roar of the cannon which played upon us. Strange to say, however, not a man received an injury. The service was concluded, the earth piled upon the deceased, and the customary volley having been fired, the procession returned to its place of muster, in the same order which it preserved when advancing.

By the time we regained the little area in front of the hospital, the sun had set, and the last rays of twilight were rapidly departing. The storm, however, continued to rage with unabated fury; and an occasional peal of thunder, so distant as to be with difficulty distinguished from a gust of wind, seemed to threaten that as yet it had by no means reached its height. In the midst of this terrible strife of the elements a variety of circumstances took place, indicative of some projected change in the situation of the army. Multitudes of cars and horses, all of them loaded with baggage, began to assemble in the rear of the camp; the heaviest of the guns were quietly withdrawn from position, and several cases of ammunition being broken open, a distribution was made to the quartermasters of the various corps. By and by, such of the sick and wounded as were in a condition to travel, were placed, with little regard to comfort, upon waggons, whilst the women and children were collected together, and directed to accompany the hospital. These things were yet in progress when a brigade of heavy infantry wound slowly past, taking the road which leads to Fishkill and Saratoga,—immediately in rear of which, baggage, heavy artillery, sick, wounded, and women, began their confused but silent march.

I was contemplating these movements with an eye of no

common interest, when a serjeant called away my attention to other matters, by reminding me that the marksmen were ordered to relieve one of the outposts, on the left of the line, and close to the river. The latter corps had already assembled for that purpose, and I joined it just as it was preparing to move from its ground. There was nothing beyond the ordinary routine of duty in the events which immediately followed. We traversed the camp, every corner of which seemed in a state of active bustle, and reached our station in safety, of which we took possession with all the form, or rather with the absence of all form, which characterizes such proceedings; and our sentries being planted, Fraser and myself sat down beside a little watchfire, apart from the men.

It was now, after having carefully ascertained that no curious ears were by, that my kinsman began to concert with me the more minute details of our project. He assured me that the moment for carrying it into execution had at length arrived; that farther delay would render it, even if successful, of no avail; and that the facilities afforded by our present situation, for accomplishing one great point in it, might not occur again. Finally, he put into my hand a piece of dirty paper, covered with such scrawls as children usually produce, as my letter of commendation to General Clinton; and urged me with great vehemence to desert on the instant. I could not hold out against his persuasions: I consented, and having done this, it was no hard matter to prevail upon me to make the act of desertion as palpable as possible. The following is the method which was adopted for that purpose.

About midnight, or perhaps half an hour before, it fell to my turn to visit the sentries. I had risen from beside the fire, and was already advanced some paces on my progress, when Fraser called me back, and speaking loudly, so as to be overheard by the men, desired that a patrol should accompany me. To this I objected as useless; but on his urging the matter warmly, and recommending that a reconnoissance be made to the front, I consented, though with much apparent reluctance. The consequence was, that a corporal with four privates became my com-

panions, as they were afterwards zealous witnesses to my treachery. It was not a very hard matter to deceive these honest fellows. Perfectly unsuspicious of any sinister design, and accustomed to pay implicit obedience to their superiors, they were easily directed to act so as to serve the great object in view, without greatly endangering my personal safety. I led them just beyond the line of vedettes; when, pretending that it would be more prudent to feel our way singly, I caused them to separate. This done, we all advanced, when, gradually drawing near the corporal, I began to tamper with him, as if desirous of making him a companion in my flight. For a while, the man either did not or would not understand me; he answered vaguely and confusedly, sometimes not appearing to see through my design at all, at others treating my proposal as a joke. At last I told him plainly, that I intended to abide by a ruined army no longer; our cause was a falling one—there was nothing to be gained by further adherence to it—every thing by adopting an opposite policy. The poor fellow stopped on hearing this declaration, and asked whether I was really serious: "Never more so in my life," answered I. "I am so far on my way towards the American lines, and I invite you to accompany me."

"Not if a captain's commission were my reward," answered the brave man; "nor shall you pass, if I have the power to prevent it!"

I had anticipated this, and, before he could bring his rifle to the present, I seized and endeavoured to wrest it from him. A brief struggle ensued, during which the piece exploded; and as I knew that the report would bring the patrol instantly upon me, I relinquished my hold and fled. The corporal pursued, shouting loudly to his comrades; but as I was more lightly equipped, as well as fleeter of foot, I speedily left him behind; and the excessive darkness favouring me, I was soon beyond the reach of capture. Several shots were indeed fired, the balls from which flew very wide of their mark; and in ten minutes after the final arrangement of my plan, I was to *all intents* and purposes a deserter.

Animated by the good fortune which had so far attended me, I pressed forward in better spirits, and with higher hopes of ultimate success than I had yet ventured to encourage. Not that I was yet free from hazard; there was at least as much danger of falling by the hands of the enemy's patrols, as there had been from our own: nevertheless, I felt confident that no calamity would befall me; and I was not deceived. A short walk of little more than a mile, brought me in front of a rebel outpost. I was challenged as a matter of course. I answered as the predicament in which I stood directed; and it having been ascertained that I was alone, permission was given me to advance. I did so, and for the first time in my life, found myself amidst a group of persons, every one of whom naturally looked upon me with an eye of suspicion.

The treatment of deserters is, in all armies, and under all circumstances, pretty much the same. The officer in command of the outpost having deprived me of my arms, and satisfied his own curiosity as to the corps to which I had belonged, the state of the British army, and the motives which led to my abandoning it, despatched me under an escort to the field-officer of the night; who, after compelling me to go again through the same ordeal, gave orders that I should be conducted without delay into the presence of General Gates. I was accordingly led over ground with every foot of which I was but too well acquainted, though the arrangements introduced upon it were, indeed, very different from those which I had previously witnessed. The enemy now occupied the site of the encampment from which we had been compelled to retire on the 7th. Instead, however, of a scanty line of tents, barely sufficing to maintain a loose communication from flank to flank, I beheld the whole surface of the country swarming with troops; whilst wigwams, blanket-huts, marquees, and other temporary domiciles, were every where huddled together in close and disorderly confusion. Hundreds of fires, likewise, were blazing, round which many companies, apparently destitute of shelter, were reposing. Guns, tumbrels, ammunition-carts, and other carriages blocked

up every avenue; and the neighing of horses sounded from all quarters, as if these animals had been extremely abundant. It would have been a striking spectacle at any time, no matter how the individual might be circumstanced that looked upon it; but to me it possessed a more than ordinary interest. I could not but painfully contrast the strength of the enemy with our weakness, as I passed, not without difficulty, from lane to lane; and I arrived at last in front of a spreading marquee, perfectly satisfied that even Sir Henry Clinton's diversion, if made at all, would hardly serve to deliver Burgoyne from the ruin that hung over him.

The tent towards which our steps were turned, stood considerably apart from all others, and occupied the orchard from which the light troops had retired previous to the assault upon our lines late in the evening of the 7th. At no great distance from it, though far enough removed to hinder a conversation from being overheard, sat a band of some ten or twelve dismounted troopers, smoking and chatting beside a large fire, the horses being picketed close beside them; whilst three sentinels patrolled backwards and forwards on all sides of it, so as to hinder any persons from approaching till they should have been previously examined. By these we were, of course, stopped; but my guide having explained his business, the serjeant was called, and we were conducted to the guard's station, where we sat down. Nor, to say the truth, was the pause thus granted by any means unacceptable. I was well aware that, in order to effect my proper object, it would be necessary to impose upon General Gates a story somewhat different from that which had amused his subordinates; and though I had pretty well arranged beforehand all that I intended to say, still the prospect of a few moments to collect my thoughts appeared far from being unpleasant. But it is no easy matter, under any circumstances, to obtain leisure for thinking in the company of North Americans; nor was I more favoured in this respect than others. Endless *questions* were put to me, all of which I found it necessary *to answer, till* at last the return messenger, who had gone

to make the general acquainted with my arrival, was looked forward to as a positive relief from immediate vexations.

No great space of time elapsed ere he arrived, bringing with him an order for my introduction into the presence. This was speedily obeyed; and I found myself the next minute standing in the heart of our enemy's camp, face to face with the officer commanding his legions. The marquee, though large, was a plain one. It was lined with a sort of blue striped cloth, and contained no other furniture besides a truckle-bed, a table, with two stools; and a solitary lamp, suspended from the cross pole, shed a not very brilliant light through it. The light was, however, strong enough to permit me to observe, that the individual before me possessed a handsome countenance and a commanding person. His age appeared to be about fifty, perhaps a year or two under; and his manners were at once courteous, gentlemanlike, and easy. There was no hauteur, nor the slightest affectation of it, about him; indeed, the readiness with which he invited me to sit down, and the familiarity with which he opened our conversation, struck me, as passing, rather than keeping too much within, the line of dignity. It was easy to perceive from his style of dress, that if he had laid down at all, it must have been in his clothes. But for the absence of his coat, for which a loose nightgown was substituted, he appeared ready to mount his horse at a moment's notice; and a multitude of papers, scattered upon his table, implied that his moments of solitude were not spent idly.

It is not worth while to lengthen out my story by detailing in full the particulars of the conversation which ensued. Enough is done when I inform you, that General Gates, though affecting all the while the most perfect indifference, did his best to draw from me a true account of the situation of the British army; and that I took good care to mix up just so much truth with falsehood, as at once to screen myself should the latter be detected, whilst by the former I conveyed no information calculated to injure my friends. *With respect to the causes which led to my desertion I stated that they* were chiefly of a private nature.

having been put upon me by my superiors, such as I did not choose to brook; and I was particularly cautious not to drop a hint which might lead my interrogator to suppose that there existed in General Burgoyne's camp a spirit either of alarm or disaffection. Nay, I went farther. I assured him with as great an air of candour as I found it possible to assume, that even now I was but a half convert from loyalty; and that though I had abandoned the king's standard, nothing should ever induce me to carry arms against my countrymen. In conclusion, I entreated his permission to retire to Philadelphia, where certain relatives by my mother's side were settled; and where I might follow the peaceable course of life which I had determined to adopt.

The general heard me out with great patience, and without the faintest apparent reduction of his good-humour. He expressed his surprise, indeed, that I should be ignorant of matters which he very soon convinced me were well known to himself; but he threw out no insinuation as if he distrusted me, far less that he had penetrated my real designs. This was particularly the case on my denying all knowledge of an intended retreat during the night. "All my spies have assured me," said he, "that the British columns are in full march; and my very patrols assert, that they have heard the rolling of gun-carriages over the noise of the storm."

"It may be so," replied I, "but I deserted, as your excellency already knows, from a distant outpost; and I assure you, that when I quitted it at least, nothing of the kind was spoken of there."

"Nay, and their boats and batteaux," continued he, without noticing my reply, "are all in motion. There has been a splashing of oars in the water since sunset: did you not say that your post lay upon the bank of the river?"

General Gates was perfectly right. Our boats had begun to move much earlier and much more incautiously, than they ought to have done, insomuch that the tumult occasioned by them had been distinctly audible to our advanced sentries. I could not therefore deny the fact; but I en-

avoured to convince him, that such was the discipline aintained in the British army, that neither inferior officers or privates, that no persons indeed, except those directly tached to head-quarters, knew either of the designs of its ief, or the objects of any particular movements.

"Perhaps so," replied he; "yet other deserters have serted, that the retrogression was openly spoken of in the nes, so early as noon."

"That," answered I confidently, "is altogether a mis-ke. I myself was accidentally an ear-witness to the pro-edings of a council of war which, no later than the night the 7th, came to the determination that the army should old its ground till supported."

"And from whence?" asked General Gates. I felt that had committed myself; but I at once said, "From the ighlands, which, we are given to understand, are even now the possession of a strong force from New York."

The general looked at me more keenly than he had yet one. "You overheard this decision?"

"I did."

"Then what might be the meaning of that abortive con-entration in the redoubt on the right of your line, towards usk?"

I explained that also to him.—"A funeral party!" ex-laimed he. "Why did your general conceal the fact from e? Had I been aware of it, he would have met with no terruption from our artillery." I assured him that the re had occasioned no loss; and he expressed himself pleased t the intelligence.

"Well, sir," continued he, "as you are the bearer of no ery important or authentic news, I cannot profess the same atisfaction at your arrival amongst us, which I should have one had the case been otherwise; but every convert from he principles of slavery to those of freedom, is welcome in he American camp. With respect to your intended removal Philadelphia, that will be a matter for future considera-on. You shall not be compelled to bear arms any where, ast of all against those whom you designate your country-*en; it is not the custom* in a free country to compel any *n to serve against his* inclination; but for the pres-

you must be content to remain quietly in camp. What you have heard respecting the advance of a force from New York is not without foundation. Such a force is at this moment in progress up the Hudson; and should you fall into the hands of any stragglers belonging to it, your fate would be certain. But it comes too late to bring any benefit to General Burgoyne. Though you have not told me, I can tell you, that his case is hopeless. His troops are dispirited, his stores are exhausted, his sick and wounded will be abandoned before to-morrow. Next day I shall overtake him endeavouring to force his way across the river; and on the day following, he will be my prisoner.—And now you may retire."

General Gates made a signal to the sentry, who immediately led me back to the body-guard, by the commander of whom I was conducted to a tent already more than adequately filled by American dragoons. Here a blanket was spread for me upon the ground; and I spent the remainder of the night, in a frame of mind such as you may imagine more easily than I could describe.

CHAPTER XIII.

I HAD slept but little, and as a necessary consequence felt but little refreshed, when a loud rolling of drums and braying of trumpets roused me. The Americans, it appeared, whatever their merits in other respects might be, were hearty admirers of such of the King of Prussia's standing rules as it lay within the compass of their imperfect discipline to obey, and beat their reveillies and tattoos just as regularly in camp before the enemy, as in garrison, when no enemy was within a hundred miles of them. The tumult of warlike instruments to which I now listened, gave, it appeared, the signal for their troops to stand to their arms and it was obeyed, if neither silently nor very orderly, still with promptitude, and much apparent willingness.

Like the rest of the army, the troopers among whom I had been lodged, sprang to their feet at the first summons. The horses, which had been picketed during the night under the slope of some broken ground, and had suffered considerably from exposure to the weather, were speedily rubbed down, saddled, and in order; whilst the men themselves, buckling on their accoutrements, took post beside them in readiness for service. Nothing, however, occurred for some time. It was still pitchy dark, and though the wind had fallen, the rain still came down in torrents, rendering every species of firearms in a great measure unserviceable. These causes necessarily operated against an advance: but I learned that patrols were sent forward with a view of discovering whether or not Burgoyne had really quitted his position; and the boisterous exultation of those about me soon gave proof that the retreat of the British army had been ascertained.

In the mean while day gradually dawned, bringing before me, as the light increased, one of the most remarkable spectacles which it has ever been my fortune to behold. The tents, marquees, and blanket-huts, which had abounded on my arrival, were all gone; they had been struck at the first beat of the drum, and were now packed upon bat-horses and cars in rear of the lines. On the ground which they formerly covered stood numerous columns of infantry, supported here and there by a few squadrons of horse; guns and tumbrils, limbered up and in order, occupied the intervals, whilst groups of general and staff officers were riding backwards and forwards, for the purpose, as it seemed, of ascertaining that matters were in a proper train, or of rectifying such errors as might be detected. Of course, the appearance and bearing of the troops now around me presented a very remarkable contrast to those of the army which I had just quitted. Very few American corps seemed to be complete in any species of equipment; fewer still were clothed in a garb at all resembling a uniform. The Continentals, as their regular regiments were denominated, wore indeed blue coats, and their belts, pouches, and firelocks, seemed to be made after the same fashion; but the under portions of their dress varied *in the* most grotesque manner, whilst their

hats seemed to have been gathered from a hundred diff fields, where a hundred different nations had fought. respect to the militia, again, nothing could exceed clownish air that distinguished them. They were arr some in the costume of their every-day occupations, so hunting-dresses, some in a sort of patchwork uniform, p English, partly French; whilst not a few would have absolutely naked, but for blankets which they fastened them, by thrusting their heads through a hole in the mi In like manner, their arms and accoutrements bore resemblance to those usually carried by soldiers. Long ing-pieces and short rifles appeared in the same platoon even side by side. One man carried his ammunition leather bag slung at his back, another preferred a shot whilst a third was contented to make use of his po and as to bayonets, not one in a hundred possessed s weapon, or bore a musket capable of receiving it. A great number were, however, armed with long knives, hung in tight waist-belts; and several carried tomah in the use of which I was given to understand that were not less skilful than the Indians.

In spite, however, of the total absence of all preten to regularity, the American army was not to be des or treated, even in idea, as a mere mob. It is true, t the niceties of parade movements, very few of the C nental regiments could boast of much proficiency they all, militia as well as regulars, seemed capable o serving a good line, and of marching in column with attention to distances. Moreover, it was easy to per that they entertained the fullest confidence both in t selves and their leader. They conversed freely, it is t their ranks; the militia in particular, appeared to s attempts to preserve quiet at defiance; but their con tion was bold, manly, and proud, implying not only a ness, but an ardent desire to be led into action. Then numbers, I should conceive that this single parade-g contained a force of not less than ten or twelve tho men; and I knew, from a variety of sources, that detachments had been made, for the purpose of hara *and* impeding the retreating army. Now the B

general could not at this moment bring into the field more than three thousand five hundred men fit for duty:—what probability was there, in case General Gates should act with promptitude, that the former could escape destruction?

With this strong impression upon my mind—with the firm assurance that General Gates needed but to push forward in order to fulfil the threat which he had lately uttered—I experienced no slight relief when I was told that the American army could not for one day at all events, probably for a greater space of time, quit its ground. By some oversight or other, the proper authorities had forgotten to furnish the men with provisions; and their last morsel having been consumed before noon on the 8th, no movement could be made till a fresh suppty should be issued out. The consequence was, that though of the position which Burgoyne had abandoned, as well as of about three hundred sick and wounded men whom his necessities had compelled him to leave behind, General Gates took possession, and though he pushed light parties along the Dovacote road, by whom several guns which had upset on the march, and a good deal of baggage, were captured, the mass of his army was paralyzed; and he saw himself in the unpleasant situation of a huntsman whose hounds drop the trail at the very moment when he considered himself secure of his prey.

To me, on the other hand, no contingency could have happened more cheering or consolatory. The intelligence communicated last night relative to the advance of a force from New York, was not forgotten:—could I but reach that force in time, Burgoyne might yet be saved. I knew that the attempt would be attended with imminent risks; should it fail, and I be recaptured, my fate was inevitable; yet the object in view was an important one, and I resolved to devote myself to its attainment. From that moment all my thoughts were turned to the devising of some plan by which the vigilance of my guards might be eluded; and the following was the result of my cogitations.

Though exceedingly attentive in every other respect, the Americans, *probably* from the absence of power to act *otherwise, had not* furnished me with any change of habi-

liments since I arrived among them. My own, as I [illegible] scarcely say, were saturated with the rain; I had slept [illegible] them thus, and thus they continued to hang about me [illegible] was not, therefore, a very gross demand upon their credu[illegible] lity to pretend that a severe illness was the consequence. I began to shiver, drew close to the fire, spoke abruptly, and exhibited other symptoms of indisposition, till at last the men to whose charge I had been intrusted, became impressed with the idea which I wished them to receive. My case was immediately reported in the proper quarter, and an order arrived for my removal to the hospital. All this was exactly as I desired it to be. About ten o'clock in the day I was placed with a detachment of sick in a covered waggon; and before nightfall, found myself an inmate of a large mansion on the outskirts of the neat and flourishing town of Albany.

So far my project had been crowned with success. I was freed from the vigilance of men whom it was not easy to deceive, and advanced twenty miles upon the journey which it behoved me to accomplish; but the difficulties which still stood in my way, were of a nature not to be contemplated without the most serious apprehension. In the first place, I was a patient in a public hospital, every room and ward in which was crowded with sick and wounded, nurses, and medical attendants; whilst a military guard regularly kept watch over it, and sentinels patrolled backwards and forwards in front of either entrance. In the next place, I was at once ignorant of the route which it would be necessary to follow, and destitute of means of subsistence by the way; for the high road would, I apprehended, prove impassable, in consequence of the great traffic which at present prevailed; and to purchase provisions any where, would unavoidably expose me to interruption. Nevertheless, the die was cast. I shut my eyes, as far as it was possible so to do, against the contemplation of danger; and turned my undivided attention to the discovery of some method of escape from Albany.

For the first day or two, every attempt to quit my ward *was strictly* prohibited. I was pronounced by the illiterate *blockhead* who attended me, to be labouring under

raging fever, and the slightest exposure to cold would, he declared, inevitably cause death. It was to no purpose that I professed myself convalescent; he knew the state of my body a great deal better than I, and he purged, bled, and otherwise tormented me, till I almost caught the disease which it had hitherto been my business to counterfeit. I need not pretend to describe what my feelings were under such circumstances. A thousand times I cursed my own short-sightedness, in having fallen upon a device which, instead of advancing, threatened entirely to disconcert my project; and many and varied were the schemes which I pondered with a view of extricating myself from my present embarrassments. Of these, the first and most obvious was, to leap the window by night, and to trust to chance and the lightness of my heels for escape; but the window, on examination, proved to be closely fastened down, besides being secured on the outside by strong iron bars. Next, I thought of seizing the miscreant, and compelling him, by a threat of instant death, to guide me beyond the town. But that, too, would have been impossible, inasmuch as the room was occupied by at least a dozen persons in addition to myself. Finally, though quite alive to the disastrous consequences of delay, I learned to yield to circumstances over which I possessed no control; and during the whole of the 10th, 11th, and part of the 12th, I continued a close prisoner.

CHAPTER XIV.

It might be about three or four o'clock in the afternoon of the 12th, when a crowd of country-people entered the town, with intelligence that a formidable expedition, both of land and naval forces, was advancing from New York. Forts Montgomery and Clinton had both been carried by assault; Fort Constitution, abandoned by its garrison, had been taken possession of; and Governor Clinton, the republican commandant on the station, being unable to hold

his ground, there was nothing in the way to prevent th
tish leader from pushing direct on to Albany.

Great, indeed, was the consternation which this
occasioned, of the correctness of which no one appea
entertain a doubt; indeed, to such a height was the
carried, that preparations began immediately to be
for the evacuation of the place.

The confusion attendant upon these proceedings pr
to me at length the opening for which I had so long
Our guards, more anxious to hear the news, than ca
the trust reposed in them, not only abandoned thei
but left every door open. Medical men, nurses, and
ants were all agape; and the very sick themselves,
them, at least, as were at all able to move, went ab
search of particulars which they had no means of l
within. I saw my opportunity at once, and I hesita
to avail myself of it. Hastily throwing on my cloth
arming myself with a carving-knife, I made a de
rush from the ward, and hurrying down stairs, I
the open air before my design could be guessed at.
there, however, and for a time all difficulties were
end. It is true that crowds of persons blocked
street, running to and fro in every direction; but
peared too much occupied with business of their own
any attention to me. I walked through the heart c
with a steady and deliberate step, unheeded and
lenged, and gained the high road which leads from
to Kingston, without a single accident befalling to
or alarm me.

Now, then, I began, as it were, to breathe with fi
Casting an anxious look behind, and seeing no one
suit, I quickened my pace into a kind of jog trot
gradually became a run,—till at last I found myself
pering along at a rate which—had it been practic
maintain it—must soon have carried me beyond the
of recapture. Unfortunately, however, the severe di
which I had undergone for no purpose, produced t
same effect which would have attended it, had
really required. I was enfeebled to a degree of
till my strength was tried, I could have had no con

and at the end of a couple of miles found, to my extreme sorrow, that my usual ability to endure fatigue had departed. I was compelled through absolute exhaustion, not only to slacken my pace, but to sit down; and I need scarcely say, that I did so in a state of violent mental excitation, which took away, in no trifling degree, from the benefits which might have otherwise attended the measure.

It seemed, however, that after so many trials, fortune was resolved at last to favour me. Not a human being made his appearance as far as my eye could reach, and I rose again soon after the sun had set, to continue my journey. As I felt myself in some measure safe—that is to say, as I could discover no danger immediately at hand, I trudged on more leisurely and in better spirits, determined to halt nowhere, as long as my limbs would perform their duty.

It was a lovely night. The moon shone with uncommon brilliancy in a sky clear and cloudless, and the air, quiet as the breathing of an infant asleep, scarcely moved the foliage which in great abundance shaded the road. My route, too, lay through a district, the singularly beautiful and romantic appearance of which could not be contemplated, even in my present perilous situation, with indifference. I need scarcely remind you that the road from Albany to Westport, in what are called the Jersey Highlands, conducts the traveller in a direction exactly parallel with the course of the Hudson,—stretching sometimes along the very margin of the river, and never diverging above half a mile from its bank. As you proceed downwards, the Hudson itself acquires, almost at every step, a more majestic, as well as a more interesting character. Now it expands itself into a broad sheet of water, rolling on with a current apparently gentle and equable,—now it is compressed between a couple of precipitous ridges, and is seen to sweep forward with more violence and greater velocity. But it is every where deep, sullen, and dark: perfectly navigable to ships of almost any burden, and, as a necessary consequence, well adapted to the purposes of commerce, of which now, I believe, ample advantage is taken. At the period to which I allude, however, few vessels of a size larger than passage-boats contaminated its

surface. It flowed then through a country very imperfectly cleared, the forests extending here and there down to the edge of the water; whilst the background on either side rose into wooded heights and eminences, which, as you approached the Jerseys, assumed the character of bold mountains.

Along this romantic road, and through this romantic country, I held my course. There was a perfect silence around me, which neither the whispering of leaves, nor the monotonous rush of water, could be said with strict propriety to disturb; for sounds such as these soon cease to be distinguished, by amalgamating, as it were, with the being of him who listens to them. Few and far between were the human habitations which I passed, in none of which the faintest symptom of living inhabitants could be discerned; nay, I traversed several villages without meeting with a solitary traveller or beholding the glimmer of a taper in a single dwelling.

You will easily believe that for all these favourable contingencies I experienced the liveliest gratitude. It appeared to me as if Providence itself had determined to carry me safely through, and that in escaping from Albany, the chief obstacle to ultimate success had been overcome.

As I pursued my journey at a tolerably brisk pace, halting but rarely, and then only for a few minutes at a time, I calculated that full thirty miles had been accomplished when the first streaks of dawn showed themselves. I was then approaching a village, the name of which I afterwards ascertained to be Loonenburgh; and feeling both exhausted and hungry, I determined, after a few minutes spent in deliberation, to ask for shelter and food from some of its inhabitants. Perhaps there was a want of prudence here; yet I calculated that among a people so simple, few suspicions were likely to be entertained, and I experienced no apprehension of being followed from Albany, now that it was left so far behind.

I accordingly pushed forward, so as to enter the place just as the sun rose; and seldom have I beheld a more *attractive* scene than his early rays rendered visible. The *hamlet* itself consisted of about ten or twelve dwellings, *constructed* after the manner of the country, entirely of *wood*. Instead of adjoining the one to the other, they were

built on either side of a level green or common, in the centre of which a clump of venerable oaks, the remnants, no doubt, of the original forest, grew, and they were all surrounded by neat gardens and extensive orchards, well stocked with vegetables and fruit-trees of various kinds. On every side were corn-fields and meadows, the former advancing, as it were, upon the wilderness, the latter sloping down in beautiful regularity towards the river. Flocks of sheep were scattered over the open space; ducks, turkeys, and other domestic fowls, ran at large upon the common; every house had its stack-yard amply filled, and the whole presented a striking picture both of comfort and security.

It was impossible to look upon all this, without contrasting painfully the condition of the district as it now stood, with what it probably would become, in case my mission produced its desired effect. However well-disposed the leader of an invading force may be, and I did not doubt that our commander was disposed to protect the country to the utmost, it is not, as I well knew, practicable to hinder the followers of an army, if not the army itself, from committing acts of outrage and rapine; and I sickened as I thought of the ruin which in all probability hung over a spot at present so flourishing. Nevertheless, this was no time for the indulgence of feelings, very amiable no doubt, though not very profitable. I suppressed mine almost as soon as they rose, and walking forward to the cottage which stood furthest in the direction of my route, I knocked loudly for admission.

It had struck me as somewhat remarkable that though every other living thing was alert and on the move, not a human being seemed awake when I entered the village. Persons whose habits correspond with those of the inhabitants of Loonenburgh, seldom lie in bed after the sun has risen; and hence it was not without surprise that I found myself unsaluted as I traversed the common. My astonishment was, however, greatly increased, when, after knocking repeatedly, no notice was taken of the signal; and I came at last to the conclusion, that the place was abandoned. With this impression on my mind, I was about to resume

my progress, when accidentally looking up, I beheld a human countenance peeping at me, with evident caution, from behind a window-curtain. I waved my hand to make the individual aware that his proceeding had been detected; and shouting loudly that I was a traveller sorely in want of rest and refreshment, I stood still to wait the event. My appeal was not lost upon the person to whom it was made. In a few seconds I heard a step in the passage, which was followed by the creaking of a bolt in its socket; and the door being opened, an old man presented himself, with a ready invitation for me to enter. I was not slow in accepting it, and followed my conductor at once into a snug parlour, where the means of satisfying hunger were speedily set before me.

As soon as the cravings of appetite were removed, I began to question my host as to the cause of his own apprehensions in particular, and the deserted appearance of the village in general. He answered cautiously and with apparent reluctance, throwing out hints of danger from all sides, and employing the expression of "the enemy" in so many contradictory fashions, that it was impossible to guess to which party he intended it to apply; but I gathered pretty well that the people of Loonenburgh dreaded the republican not less than the royal troops, and I more than half suspected, that in their hearts they were loyalists. The most acceptable intelligence, however, which I obtained from him was, that a fleet and army, under General Vaughan and Commodore Wallace, were in successful and rapid progress up the Hudson, and that their arrival at Loonenburgh itself might be expected by the morrow at the latest. No time was granted to question the evidence upon which the above rumour rested, ere it received a direct and most unexpected confirmation. The old man was yet speaking, when the roar of a distant cannonade became audible, which he pronounced at once to arise from an attack by the British squadron upon the rebel works at Asopus.

I cannot pretend to describe the effect which that most *sublime of* all earthly sounds produced upon me. I sprang *to my feet* with energies supernaturally renewed, as

a piece of money into my host's hand, made
the instant to pursue my journey. What had
) fear? Ten miles of level road alone divided
the great goal of my wishes; and if fortune only
me as she had hitherto done, these would be com-
thin the space of three hours at the furthest. The
watched my proceedings with a subdued but saga-
k, and penetrated, beyond a question, into my
and designs in a moment,—though he said no-
imply this, but, wishing me a pleasant journey,
the door, and deliberately bolted it after me.
a step light and buoyant, in spite of the fatigues of
ous night, I pressed forward. Five minutes' walk
ie clear of the village; and I was already halfway
e cultivated land, when accidently looking back, I
to my horror and dismay, a party of mounted
dvancing along the road behind me. That I be-
ible to them at the same moment there was no
doubt; for though when I first caught sight of
y moved leisurely and at a walk, they immediately
horses to a trot, and rode towards me.
was to be done? Had this accident occurred at
ny other point, I might have found shelter in the
nd there baffled pursuit; but now I was in the
an open plain, to traverse which before I should be
a appeared impossible. Despair, however, gave
age. I knew that should I fall into their hands
could save me; I determined to make one effort
wn preservation, and I ran with all the speed of
vas master towards the nearest thicket.
no sooner quickened my pace than a shout arose,
yond all question marked me as the object of hot
erate pursuit. This for the first moment or two
a stimulus to fresh exertions; but the race was a
qual one, for I was worn down with past exertions,
by my sufferings in the hospital, and quite in-
of keeping long at the top of my speed. Already
he clattering of horses' hoofs in my rear, which ap-
every instant nearer and nearer, whilst the friendly

thicket towards which my steps were turned seemed to increase rather than diminish its distance from me. I became desperate. I looked behind,—the nearest dragoon was within two hundred yards of me, whilst the wood was fully five hundred yards ahead; and as my strength and breath were rapidly failing, I gave myself up for lost. At this moment a chance appeared, faint indeed, but still within the possibility of attainment; and I grasped at it. A shallow ditch, or rather drain, ran through the middle of the field across which I was running, and by bending a little to the left, I saw that I could interpose a hedgerow between me and my pursuers. I did so, and no sooner shut them out from sight than I plunged into the drain. There I lay pressed closely to the bottom, my person being barely screened by the low edges, in a state of feeling which my imagination itself cannot now conjure up, far less my powers of description delineate.

I had barely time to act thus, when the thunder of horses' hoofs became more and more terrible. Voices, too, were heard, in loud and triumphant clamour, till the whole troop swept by within fifteen feet of the spot where I lay. How I listened to the receding noise of the chase! with what an agony of joy my heart beat, as it became every instant less audible! till at last I ventured to look up, and received the assurance that my pursuers were gone. Now then was the time for me to act. I did not dare to rise, because I saw at a glance that any attempt to traverse the open country must expose me, in case of their return, to immediate detection. But judging from the direction in which it ran that the drain would lead to the river, I resolved to follow it. I accordingly dragged myself along upon my belly, a distance of perhaps a quarter of a mile, moving with extreme caution and no little difficulty; and my labours were amply recompensed by the conclusion to which they led. I had not been mistaken as to the termination of the drain. It not only ended at the river, as I had supposed it would, but conducted me to a spot where *a small boat*, with a couple of oars, lay moored to the stump *of a tree*. In an instant the cord which fastened it was

the next I sprang into it; and plying the oars my might, I was soon far beyond the reach of my l pursuers.

was the last adventure worth recording, which during this memorable campaign. The Hudson ɔeen cleared of all American craft, by the reported of the British squadron, I met with no interruption my solitary voyage, and I reached Kingston in . little before noon, in front of which Commodore lay at anchor. I was received by both the naval itary commanders with the consideration which I ıon to expect from them. My credentials were ex- and approved, my story listened to with patience, romise made that General Burgoyne's requisition ıe attended to in due time. That time, however, rived. The 13th had been consumed in the cap- Kingston; the 14th was devoted to its destruction; was spent I know not how, and on the 16th orders h on the morrow were issued; but before that came, the last act in this humiliating drama had ed. Authentic intelligence reached the general, eaty which rendered Burgoyne and his brave army onal prisoners to the Americans; and he returned possible precipitation, crest-fallen and humiliated, York.

THE night was far advanced when Captain Macdirk brought his narrative to a conclusion; and it was easy to perceive, by the heavy eyes and nodding heads of some of his auditors, that no objection would have been offered to its curtailment. Nevertheless the customary meed of praise and thanks was not denied even to him; and the worthy man retired to rest, satisfied, I do not doubt, that he had established for himself a proud name in the list of storytellers.

For myself, my proceedings that night corresponded in every respect with those which had occurred on the night preceding. I slept long and soundly, and was awoke on the following morning by an announcement that breakfast waited my appearance. Nor here, again, did matters occur in any degree different from those which attended me yesterday. Again I talked of prosecuting my journey; spoke of engagements entered into and time limited; and again my arguments were one by one met and overcome by my hospitable entertainer. For the third time, therefore, I consented to continue his guest—an announcement which gave, or appeared to give, universal satisfaction; and for the third time, when the dinner-hour returned, I found myself seated at the right hand of Major Cohorn.

"I congratulate you," said he to me in a whisper, whilst the servants were removing the cloth, "on having been prevailed upon to give us your company this day. It has fallen to the turn of those to entertain us, whom we consider as the best chroniclers amongst us, and who never detain us above half the length of time which our friend Macdirk devotes to such purposes."

I expressed, as in duty bound, my perfect satisfaction, not only with the future but the past; though I was not, in reality, distressed by the announcement thus made to me. Whether the major's judgment was correct or otherwise, the reader must determine for himself, after he has perused the following—Captain Section's tale of MAIDA.

MAIDA.

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MAIDA.

CHAPTER I.

I THINK it was on the 27th of June, 1806, that the —— regiment of foot, of which I was a member, received orders to march on the following day from Messina to Melazzo. For what purpose the march was about to be undertaken, there was not a man or officer in the corps who could be ignorant. Rumours of an intended descent upon the coast of Calabria had long been afloat, receiving, as it was natural that they should, every day an increased degree of credibility; so that when the route so frequently anticipated at length arrived, surprise, at least, was not among the sensations to which it gave birth. We all knew, though not as yet formally assured of it, that our journey would end in an immediate embarkation, and there was not an individual amongst us who looked forward to the issue with other feelings than those of unmitigated delight.

You cannot have forgotten that at the period to which I now refer, the royal family of Naples, driven from their continental possessions, were fain to take a refuge at Palermo, and place themselves under the protection of the British army then stationed in Sicily. With the court came whole crowds of degenerate nobles, fleeing from an enemy whom they dared not face; who contented themselves to evince by useless and woman-like execrations, a patriotism which, had it been real, might have found ample *scope for exertion in* the field. This was the more to be *reprobated, as the* Neapolitan peasantry, particularly the

natives of Calabria, wanted but a leader in order t
them formidable even to the French. Inhabiting a
tainous country, which abounds in strong milita
tions, where rocky eminences, and deep ravines,
nating in defiles, rough, broken, and easily defen
off one valley from another,—the Calabrese posse
by nature and their social habits, all the qualities n
to make soldiers; and had they been headed at t
by a chief on whom they could rely, would have ma
themselves, without doubt, against any disparity
bers. Unfortunately for them, however, their nobles
enjoying the full influence which feudal institut
calculated to create, possessed neither courage no
enough to turn these to a right account. The con
was, that the peasantry were left to pursue whate
sures, and to make whatever exertions, their nat
dihood might suggest; and the Peninsula bec
theatre of desultory, unconnected, and disastrous w

When a state of things similar to this prevails in
vince, the reports which emanate from it are all o
nature as to convey any thing but a correct picture c
On the present occasion, for instance, rumours the
travagant, of the daring intrepidity of the Calabr
of the successes to which it led, poured in upon us
ally. The brave mountaineers would never, it was
submit to a foreign yoke; they were resolved to pe
man, sooner than renounce their allegiance to a p
whom they entertained the warmest affection; n
needed but the appearance of a small auxiliary
their country to rouse the whole male population to

I am not prepared to say that these rumours
implicit credit any where, far less that they were be
their full extent by Sir John Stuart; but the
least, who, by the way, possessed more spirit t
whole Neapolitan Court put together, was pc
affected by them. She saw, or professed to see
unshaken loyalty of the Calabrese, a proof that th
of Ferdinand's subjects were universally with him;
became urgent with the British general to seat her
once more upon the throne of his ancestors by for

Nobody can for a moment suppose that the mind of General Stuart was wrought upon by the arguments of the queen of the Sicilies. Her entreaties, however, had weight with him; not indeed to aim at the conquest of Naples, to which his means were wholly inadequate, but to try the temper of the Calabrese, by making a descent upon their coasts, and offering to them a rallying-point. It is probable, too, that he felt a desire to distinguish his command by the performance of some memorable exploit, previous to the arrival of the officer appointed to succeed him,—a feeling not only natural, but highly to be commended in a man placed under his circumstances. Nor were other and equally cogent reasons wanting to urge him on to the undertaking. The enemy had collected extensive magazines of stores and provisions at different points in the province, particularly at Monte Leone, which it became a matter of some moment to destroy; whilst the very *éclat* of doing so could not fail of deterring him from any thing like an attempt to invade Sicily itself. Besides, General Stuart was one of those who believe, that every thing which adds to the military renown of a country, adds likewise to its strength; and as he laboured under no distrust of the brave men whom he commanded, he was anxious to afford them an opportunity of proving and feeling their own superiority. But enough of disquisition.

The sun was just rising on the morning of the 28th, in the full splendour which marks his coming and going in southern latitudes, when the loud blast of the bugle summoned us to our stations. I should express myself in terms quite unfit to be used on such an occasion, were I to say that the signal was obeyed with alacrity merely. It was anticipated,—it was more than anticipated. Numbers never thought of undressing during the previous night, and the whole battalion clustered about the parade-ground, long before the hour appointed for muster arrived. Nor was this the offspring of tumultuous zeal, such as generally attaches to young soldiers, whose knowledge of war and its concomitant privations and dangers has been derived solely from the report *of others. Our* battalion had served, not only in Holland *under the Duke of* York, but in Egypt; and though

numbers who witnessed these campaigns, bore indeed no proportion to those who had enlisted since, still there was a sort of traditional acquaintance with the real service amongst us, of the force of which every soldier is aware. Yet were the veterans to the full as sanguine as their less favoured comrades. Such among them as remembered Egypt only, looked back with pride, and forward with confidence; such as had served in Holland also, felt, or fancied that they had stains to wipe out, as well as triumphs to increase; whilst the tyros desired nothing more ardently than the opportunity which even one campaign promised to afford, of taking their share in such conversations as wile away the evenings in camp or quarters.

Our journey from Messina to Melazzo was one of the most agreeable which it has ever been my good fortune to perform. It is true, that as the day advanced, we suffered not slightly under the excessive heat of the sun; but to compensate that grievance, the scenery around was magnificent, whilst our own thoughts would have been sufficient of themselves to carry us gaily through hardships tenfold more oppressive. The road which we followed led, as I need scarcely inform you, through a blooming and fertile district, where the vine and the orange, the myrtle and the olive, shed their fragrance around; whilst the prospect both to the right and left was as glorious as the imagination of man can very well conceive. On one hand lay the Mediterranean, calm and peaceful as a huge inland lake, and transparently blue, like the face of the heavens on a clear frosty night in England. On the other rose a succession of bold heights,—the roots or ramifications of Mount Etna, which reared its giant top far into ether, not exactly in a blaze, but covered with a crown of peculiar vapour, from which it is never free. Then again, a hamlet, a chateau, or solitary cottage, from time to time appeared, surrounded, as these always are, with tracts of cultivated land and tasteful gardens; whilst flocks of goats looked down upon us from the rocks, and the sound of the goatherd's pipe caught our ears, as often as our own martial music was *silent.* On the whole, I do not recollect to have performed a *march* replete with circumstances of higher excitement, or

more lively gratification,—feelings in which every individual, men, officers, women, and even children, seemed equally to participate.

The distance between Messina and Melazzo measuring rather more than twenty miles, the day was far spent ere the latter place opened upon our view. You are doubtless aware that it is a small town, lying at the very bottom of the bay, and on the skirt of the cape by which one side of the bay is formed; and surrounded on all sides by gentle hills, which keep both town and harbour concealed, till you arrive immediately above them. You will not, therefore, find any difficulty in imagining the nature of the feelings which affected us, when such a scene as the bay of Melazzo then presented, suddenly opened upon us. Figure to yourselves the entire roadstead crowded with transports and vessels of war, from the topmasts of which a thousand flags were floating, and round which hundreds of boats were collected, some rowing to shore, others from it, and all filled with articles of baggage, stores, and warlike equipments. On the land, again, multitudes of white tents were spread over the entire face of the slope, affording temporary shelter against the heat by day, and the dews by night, to the corps as they came in; whilst guns, tumbrels, howitzers, cars, and ammunition waggons, stood regularly picketed at a legitimate distance in the rear of the encampment. Then, again, there were soldiers of all arms, and in various uniforms, wandering here and there, the whole of whom, as soon as the head of our column showed itself, rushed forward to bid us welcome; whilst in a less space of time than could have been imagined necessary for the purpose, half a dozen regimental bands turned out to meet us. Nor let me forget to mention the shouts of hearty congratulation with which our comrades greeted us. These rang through the air, stirring up to its highest pitch an enthusiasm which was not previously dull, till the feeblest and most foot-sore amongst us regained his strength, and marched forward with the pride and high bearing of a conqueror.

I know not whence it arose, but no tents had been provided *for our accommodation*, and we were in consequence

moved down into the village, where quarters were assigned to us. These were not, indeed, either very commodious or very clean; yet were we a great deal too happy in our own anticipations, to permit inconveniences, in their nature so trifling, to distress us. Fatigue, moreover, stood our friend then, as it has often done on after-occasions; and our sleep was not the less sound, because many amongst us preferred their cloaks upon the floor, to beds already peopled by extremely active colonists. For my own part, as I had never closed an eye during the night preceding, neither the continued whispers of romance, nor nuisances of which others complained, were by me perceived after the first half-hour of our arrival. I barely took time to devour a wholesome, but not very savoury supper, when I threw myself at length upon a marble table, and passed into the land of forgetfulness.

The force now assembled in and around Melazzo amounted to no more than four thousand two hundred men, and was made up of the following corps, divided and brigaded under the leaders mentioned beneath. The light brigade, composed of the light companies of the 20th, 27th, 35th, 58th, and 81st regiments, of two companies of Corsican Rangers, and one hundred and fifty battalion men from the 35th regiment, was placed under the orders of Major-general Robinson. The first brigade, made up of the 78th and 81st regiments, was headed by Brigadier-general Auckland; Brigadier-general Lowrie Cole had the second, or, as it was termed, the grenadier brigade, consisting of the 27th regiment, and grenadier companies of the 20th, 35th, 58th, and 81st; whilst the reserve, composed of the 58th, and Watteville's regiment, was intrusted to Colonel John Oswald. Twelve pieces of cannon, fours and sixes, with two light howitzers, constituted our park of artillery, to which, through a lamentable deficiency of horses, but a scanty supply of ammunition could be afforded; whilst of cavalry we had not so much as a single troop, to reconnoitre the open country. Nevertheless, our army, though undeniably weak in point of numbers, and crippled in some of its most important points, was such as any general might have felt proud to command; whilst the brave fellows who

formed it entertained, both in themselves and in their leader, the most boundless and characteristic confidence.

The morning of the 29th was considerably advanced ere the troops began to assemble; and it might be about ten o'clock in the day when the regiments, being mustered on the brow of the heights, received orders to march down in columns of brigades towards the beach. This was done, the light brigade leading, and the next following in parade order, with bayonets fixed, colours flying, and bands playing; after which a beautiful line was formed along the shore, bayonets were unscrewed, and the men permitted to stand at ease. In the meanwhile all the boats of the fleet, which had previously assembled for the purpose, were drawn up as near to the land as their draught of water would allow; and the crews standing up with elevated oars, hailed us with a hearty shout. Behind us, again, the entire face of the high ground was covered with spectators, among whom might be discovered the king, the queen, with the principal members of the court, who bade us farewell with enthusiastic vivats, and waving of flags and handkerchiefs.

At length a gun from the commodore gave notice that the ships were ready to receive us; immediately upon which the embarkation began. In the most perfect order and admirable discipline, regiment after regiment stepped into the boats, which, as each division received its complement, pushed off, and rowed for the fleet. Nor was there any needless delay in bringing off the guns, with such hospital and commissariat stores as had been deemed requisite. The sea was smooth and placid; the winds were so light as in no degree to impede the rowing; and all things were effected with the regularity of clockwork. The sailors, too, exerted themselves strenuously, pulling backwards and forwards without the intermission of a moment; and hence within the space of little more than six hours was the entire expedition afloat.

Not a moment was lost in getting the fleet to sea. The troops were no sooner received in their relative vessels, *and the boats which* conveyed them hoisted on board, than

the signal was made to weigh; and anchors were raised and topsails cast loose as it were in a moment. Next came the gradual gliding from the roadstead, and the last loud cheer given from every deck, which caused the hills of Sicily to re-echo; and all became immediately as quiet and orderly as if the people had "transacted their business on the great waters" for months.

CHAPTER II.

During the voyage which ensued, and which was at once brief and agreeable, no event befel worthy of record. The winds were light, but they proved favourable, sending us on our course at the rate of some five knots an hour, and the ships held their way so steadily through the water, as to hinder any of the grievances customary on such occasions from being experienced.

As I have already hinted, however, our voyage was an exceedingly short one; for the 1st of July found us snugly at anchor in the bay of St. Euphemia. Nothing could exceed the promptitude and decision with which, as soon as the fleet came to its moorings, the disembarkation began. Time was scarcely allowed to remark upon the splendid mountain coast of Calabria, when we were hurried rapidly, but in admirable order, into the boats; and in less than half an hour the grenadiers and light infantry, supported by the 78th Highlanders, had gained the beach. Instantly the troops sprang to shore, and instantly they were formed company by company, no enemy making his appearance to harass or annoy them; upon which the boats again pushed off to the fleet, and fresh battalions poured to their support. But it was not deemed sufficient to secure a footing close upon the edge of the sea. A strong advanced guard pushed forward, with the view *both of* covering the arrival of their comrades, and obtaining *intelligence*; and the event proved that the precaution *thus taken* was by no means useless.

From what has been already said respecting the condition of the two Calabrias, you will be prepared to learn that the French, though holding these provinces with at least ten thousand men, were not able to collect upon any given spot an army in a moment. General Regnier, to oppose the disjointed operations of the insurgents, had been compelled to break up his division into numerous petty corps, which were now dispersed hither and thither, keeping up scarcely the semblance of a communication, either among themselves or with head-quarters. But the whole compass of Lower Calabria is so narrow, that these could within the space of a day or two be reunited, whilst their very separation, though rendering them inefficient against a formidable enemy in the field, furnished them with much more accurate information than they could have otherwise obtained. Our advanced guard had, accordingly, not proceeded far when its videttes gave notice that a French force was in their front. This was one of the many detachments already referred to, which being made aware of the arrival of the English, was on its march to reconnoitre, and which instantly formed as if to dispute the further advance of our light troops. I was not present in the affair that followed, therefore can give no particular account of it. I believe, however, that a little skirmishing alone ensued, equally harmless to both parties; after which the French retreated with precipitation, leaving our people masters of the field.

Whilst this was going on in front, every nerve was strained to bring the remainder of the army on shore; and such was the diligence shown by all ranks and classes of persons that that important object was gained a full hour before sunset. This done, the troops instantly formed, and following the route of the advance, pressed forward, taking the direction of the village of St. Euphemia, near which, upon a spot of very favourable ground, the general determined to pass the night. Pickets and outposts were accordingly planted, patrols appointed, and other precautions adopted, after which our men piled their arms, and *made ready to bivouac.* Finally numerous fires were lighted, *provisions and* wine in adequate quantities were ser-

out, and we lay down, with cloaks or blankets wrapped round us, in the open air.

It was my fortune on that night to take my place beside an individual, of whom I cannot to this day think without feelings of affection and regret. Percy Vernon was a universal favourite, not in his own regiment only, but wherever he was known. He had joined us some years previous to the present expedition, having obtained promotion, as was then very commonly done, from another corps; and though looked at when he first came among us with an eye of suspicion, he had nevertheless contrived, in that period, to secure the cordial esteem of the whole mess. For myself, I loved him like a brother, and I am quite sure I speak the truth when I aver, that the feelings nourished by me towards him, responded only to similar feelings cherished by him towards me.

Vernon's age was about twenty, or perhaps a year or two beyond it. He was rich, well connected, had received a liberal education, and owed to nature a finely-proportioned figure, with an exceedingly agreeable and manly countenance. His rise in the profession had been rapid, for he was already a captain, and he understood all the duties of a soldier, as well as of an officer, perfectly. To these, indeed, he was particularly attentive, himself setting the example of a strictness which he exacted from all under his command; and he possessed the happy and most enviable talent of securing implicit obedience, at the same time that he neither trenched upon others' dignity nor wounded their feelings. Vernon's temper was singularly amiable; there was a warm-heartedness about him which ever prompted him to acts of kindness, and a readiness to oblige even at the expense of serious inconvenience to himself; whilst a ready flow of wit, and powers of conversation not often surpassed, were admitted on all hands to belong to him.

Of the events which distinguished Vernon's military career previous to his becoming a member of our mess, we knew scarcely any thing. He brought with him no introductory letters from the regiment which he had quitted, and he seemed almost to avoid a reference to it or its adventures. We gathered, indeed, that he had served in

Egypt, at the period of which expedition he must have been little more than a boy; but unlike most boys who have smelt powder, he seemed nowise disposed to describe the campaign; and always turned the conversation into a new channel, should it by chance bear upon that point. On more than one occasion I, from whom he seemed to have no secrets, expressed my surprise at this; but he met my expostulations invariably with a laugh, or some good-natured joke. "Have patience, my friend," he would say; "wait till you become yourself a witness of such scenes, and you will discover that there is more of pain than pleasure attending them; and that it is quite enough to go through them in reality, without recurring to them again and again, after they are passed."

This always silenced me. Though I avowed my own predilection for such details, I nevertheless gave him credit for possessing good grounds on which to rest his aversion from them; indeed I learned by degrees to regard him as more of a hero, simply because he never boasted of the exploits which he had performed.

Some months had passed in this manner, when a little occurrence befel, which struck me at the time as curious, but of which I thought no more as soon as the first impression made by it wore away. It was this. It happened on a certain occasion, that a stranger was invited to dine at our mess, of whom no one appeared to know more, than that he was a Lieutenant-Colonel somebody, who had visited Sicily from motives of pleasure or health. The fact was stated to Vernon and myself, who had been abroad all day among the defiles of Etna, and returned just as the first bugle was sounding for dinner; and we paid no more heed to it than we were accustomed to pay to similar announcements. We ran home, dressed, and hurried off to the mess-room.

As chance would have it, Vernon filled the office of president for the week; and the stranger being the guest of the regiment at large, not of any individual officer, Vernon, as usual, proceeded to take his place. He had gained the *head of the table,* and was making ready to assume the *chair, when his* eye suddenly rested upon the countenance

the guest, as the eye of the guest rested upon his. I thought poor Vernon would have fallen to the ground. His colour fled, he became deadly pale, and his whole frame shook as with an ague fit. The stranger, who saw this, and evidently felt for it, instantly held out his hand. "Ah, Vernon," cried he, in accents of marked kindness, "how delighted I am to see you;" then leaning forward whispered something in his ear.

Vernon grasped the extended hand, pressed it warmly, and thanked the speaker with a look as expressive of fervent and heartfelt gratitude as one man ever threw upon another. But his natural cheerfulness by no means returned. The dinner went on, indeed, as if nothing had happened, our president making strenuous exertions to be as he was accustomed to be; but neither he nor our guest succeeded, though both manifestly desired it, in regaining their composure. In few words, the travelling colonel quitted us at a much earlier hour than our notions of hospitality exactly relished; and Vernon scarcely saw him gone, when he too rose from the table, and withdrew.

It was not possible to avoid arriving at the conclusion, first, that Vernon and the stranger must have met before, and, secondly, that in the course of their acquaintance something must have occurred painful to the feelings of the former. Every one made remarks to this effect as soon as the parties most interested were gone; and I, though I said nothing, felt that the remarks were not without a show, at least, of plausibility. I was vexed; it was not curiosity that was excited in me,—that were a feeble term to employ in such a case,—but I experienced the most irrepressible desire to penetrate a mystery, in which I involuntarily apprehended that the character of my friend was in some way or other implicated. I quitted the mess-table instantly, and followed Vernon with the intention of extorting from him some reason for his remarkable conduct.

I hurried off to his quarters, and presuming upon our strict intimacy, opened the door without knocking. Vernon *was not* in his sitting-room, so I passed through, and *attempted to* open the door of the chamber beyond,—but it *was fastened* on the inside. I knocked, and was instantly

hailed by my friend, who desired to know, in a tone of displeasure, who stood without. I answered, and was immediately admitted. Upon a table opposite to me lay certain writing materials, a naked razor, and a pistol, the latter of which Vernon somewhat hastily snatched up and thrust into a drawer. I was forcibly struck by the circumstance, and turned my gaze with increased apprehension upon Vernon himself. He was pale as ashes, his lips were white and livid, and there was an expression bordering upon frenzy in his glancing eye.

"Good God! Vernon," exclaimed I "what is the matter? You are ill, or something has occurred to agitate and distress you in no common degree."

"You say truly," replied he in a stifled and husky tone, as if the very muscles of the throat had become enlarged, and prohibited free respiration, "I am ill, very ill, so ill that life on these terms has no value! But it matters not, and I would rather it were so."

I was deeply affected by the wild and incoherent manner in which these words were uttered, no less than by the singularly abstracted demeanour of the speaker altogether; but feeling that this was not a moment in which to exhibit symptoms of weakness or evince any surprise, I thought only of devising some means by which his sufferings might be subdued. I proposed to summon the doctor; but that he positively prohibited. "No, no," said he, "it is only a fit to which I am occasionally liable, and which never passes away so speedily as when I am left to myself. The doctor could do nothing for me."

I did not urge the measure, and as he pointed to a seat, I took it. That I had done him an essential service by thus breaking in upon his solitude, the lapse of a few moments served to prove. Having walked several times from one corner of the chamber to another in silence, he suddenly advanced towards the table, seized a sheet of paper on which he had been writing, and tore it to atoms; then rubbing his hand violently across his brow once or twice, proposed that we should walk abroad. I readily consented, and taking *his arm within mine*, we hurried off towards the Strand.

The soft calm air of night, with the quiet roar of the

waters as they broke upon the pebbly shore, produced their naturally soothing effect upon Vernon. We had scarcely cleared the tumult of the city, when he began to recover his habitually placid deportment, and before we had walked a quarter of an hour by the seaside, he was completely himself. It was now for the first time that I began to inquire seriously both into the cause of his recent distressing conduct, and of his agitation at meeting the stranger; but I soon perceived that such questions would draw from him no avowal. He shrank from them, palpably, undisguisedly, and painfully. At first he would have evaded them; but finding that I pressed the matter upon him, he declared openly his disinclination to answer. "For God's sake," said he, "if you value my peace of mind, do not press me further. The time may come, nay it must come, when you shall know all; but if you desire to continue on terms of intimacy with me, ask me no further questions now."

There was no resisting an appeal like this. I saw that to go on must give him pain, whilst it held out no promise of satisfying my own misgivings; so I at once, and in the best humour which I could command, changed the subject.

Days, weeks, nay months passed by, without causing any circumstance to take place, calculated to recall, either to my mind or the minds of my comrades, the incident above recorded. As to Vernon, four-and-twenty hours had not passed over his head ere he became, in every point of view, the man that he ever had been since he joined the regiment. The strange colonel (whose name I never discovered) quitted Messina on the following morning: and as if his departure had been an event upon which his fondest hopes rested, Vernon was immediately restored to his good-humour and agreeable vivacity. Nay, he even excelled, or strove to excel himself. He was the life and soul of every party; gay, cheerful, witty, obliging, and generous to the last degree; winning, without at all seeming to court, the absolute love of all around him, whilst in matters of duty his diligence increased rather than fell off, till he was pronounced, not by his own commanding officer only, but by the *general in* command of the garrison, one of the most *promising* officers in the service.

I have already told you, that I was attached to Vernon by ties far stronger than those which usually bind one brother officer to another; it was but natural, therefore, that I should rejoice, in the reputation which he was establishing for himself. I even looked forward with anxiety to the next promotion, in which his name was expected to be included, with the full expectation that before long he would take the command of some regiment; and it was already agreed between us, that as soon as that event should occur, I would obtain my next step by his recommendation. But things fell out not quite so favourably as we had anticipated.

I stated some time ago, that for several weeks previous to the arrival of the route which sent us, as described above, from Messina to Melazzo, a variety of rumours obtained circulation, all of them tending to produce the persuasion, that we were on the eve of active employment in the presence of the enemy. The projected expedition became now the standing subject of conversation, at dinner, in evening parties, on parade, and even during our rides and walks; whilst all professed their extreme anxiety to find that the hope thus held out should not prove illusory. Vernon was far from declining to join in such conversations. Like those about him, he speculated freely upon the feasibility of the scheme under consideration; but it was somewhat remarkable that while every one besides pronounced it not only within the reach of possible accomplishment, but perfectly attainable, all his reasonings tended to an opposite conclusion. He insisted that it were sheer insanity, circumstanced as the kingdom of Naples was, to attempt the re-conquest of a state which could not defend itself from attack. He professed his utter disbelief in the stories so freely circulated, touching the loyalty of the Neapolitans generally, and their abhorrence of the French; whilst the reports of the daring hardihood of the Calabrese, and their petty victories, he turned on all occasions into absolute ridicule.

Vernon had obtained, and he deserved to obtain, the character of a very prudent and sagacious fellow; and hence his arguments, though going decidedly against the stream

of popular feeling, were invariably listened to with respe
Yet they sometimes amazed such as, like myself, w
willing to draw conclusions rather from feeling than
reason. Nevertheless, my admiration of the man was
from experiencing a diminution; I question, indeed, w
ther it rose not higher, from a conviction that prude
was not less operative than courage in forming his milit
character.

In this state things continued till the 27th of June, w
as I informed you some time ago, the order for our m
arrived. It happened that Vernon and I spent that
as we were in the habit of spending many, on the w
The officers of the regiment having built a scho
manned it from among themselves, and none were
devotedly attached to marine excursions than oursel
indeed, Vernon was by far the most skilful pilot amon
and, as a necessary consequence, the most enthus
sailor. There had been a sharp squall that mor
which it required a good deal of knowledge and
nerve to weather; and Vernon, having heroically c
his vessel through it, was in the highest spirits. I
mood we returned to quarters, where the hurried move
and excited gestures even of the privates upon guar
sured us that something out of the ordinary cou
events had occurred. We eagerly demanded from
poral whom we met, what had happened.

"The very thing, sir," replied the man, "whi
have all so long desired. Thank God, the order has
at last; and to-morrow, please God, we embark."

An involuntary shout burst from my lips, in which
fidently expected that Vernon would join; but it wa
so. On turning to him, I found that his mirth ha
denly deserted him.

"What!" exclaimed I, "down-hearted at such ne
this?"

"No," replied he, "not down-hearted,—at leas
down-hearted on my own account. But—but—I hop
is not so,—I hope we are not to embark quite so ea
to-morrow."

"*Why* not?" asked I: "if we embark at all, w
now?"

"Because," answered he, "I am fearful that I shall not be able to accompany the regiment. Could it be deferred only till I could visit England—"

"Visit England!" cried I, interrupting him: "why, man, all Italy will, I trust, be ours, before a ship could reach Gibraltar, far less England."

"Then, if I could wait for the next packet. That comes in, if I recollect right, a fortnight hence."

"Vernon," replied I, "you of course are the best judge as to the urgency of your own affairs; but as far as I am concerned, I tell you honestly, that did the fortunes of my life depend on my staying behind the regiment, I would not stay. You must act as you see proper; but such are my sentiments."

"And they are what they ought to be," cried he, his face flushing as he spoke. "You are right. When a soldier is ordered to meet the enemy, all other considerations must yield to that of honour. Let the consequences be what they may, I will accompany the regiment; so let us go home and prepare."

We ran home immediately. Our baggage was soon packed, and what few dispositions we deemed it necessary to make, were made in a twinkling. After which we joined the mess, and spent, like our brother officers, an evening of extreme enjoyment, because of high excitation.

CHAPTER III.

I WAS too busy with affairs of my own to pay much heed either to Vernon or any one besides, from the moment when the mess separated on the 27th, up to our landing on the 1st of July. It is true that, being one of his subalterns, he and I had constant intercourse, but it was never very confidential, being on all occasions limited either to points of duty, or to the ordinary conversation of persons in our circumstances. Even during the landing we came into

contact only as leaders of the same company, and we performed our first short march much as it would have been performed by persons standing towards one another in the light of common acquaintances. At night, however, when the bivouac was formed, we drew, as it were, involuntarily together. A fire was lighted for us apart from those of the men; beside which we sat down, to discuss, as it was time we should, the business in which we were engaged.

"Well," said I, "you see our surmises were correct. General Stuart is determined at least to strike a blow before he resigns Naples into the hand of Buonaparte."

"I doubt the fact still," replied Vernon; "I am still unwilling, that is, unable to believe, that a man of General Stuart's experience will risk such a force as this in the presence of the immense masses which the enemy have at their command. In fate's name what can he gain by it? If he win a battle, he is too weak to follow it up; if he be defeated, not only are we destroyed, but Sicily falls. No, no, Section, rely upon it, that we shall abide where we are some four-and-twenty hours, for the purpose of trying of what stuff the natives are composed, and then return quietly to our ships, and to our old cantonments in the island."

"I hope not," replied I, "and I believe not. I am sure that no man in his senses would embark on so mad an affair as this; and that our general has too much regard for the honour of his army, to withdraw till it shall have at least measured its strength with the French. A fight we ought to have, and a fight we must have."

Vernon poked the embers of the fire with the point of his sword, and was for some minutes silent. At last he said, as it appeared to me, unconsciously, "If I could believe this—if I could have believed it—"

"What then?" asked I.

He looked up, as if surprised at my question. "To what do you allude?" said he.

"You say," answered I, "that if you could believe this—What do you mean?"

"*Oh!* nothing—nothing at all, I assure you," answered *he hurriedly*. "There are one or two affairs which I could

have wished to arrange previously to encountering the hazards of a battle; but it matters little about them. I dare say I shall escape, and, if not, things must take their course."

"Nay, Vernon," replied I, "if the case really be so, it appears to me that you ought to make such arrangements as circumstances will allow. I must, of course, run the same risks with yourself; but the chances are double that one of us escapes, than that both escape. If, therefore, there be any thing upon your mind which distresses you, tell it to me. You know that you may trust me; and should I survive, you know also that I will, to the utmost of my power, fulfil your wishes."

Vernon was a good deal agitated. He shifted his position more than once, as if struggling with some secret feeling; but he overcame the emotion at last, and replied calmly:

"As yet," said he, "the prospect of a battle is remote, and it may not, probably will not, come nearer. I will not, therefore, open my mind to you now; but should circumstances require it, I will take you at your word. So God bless you, my dear Section. Let us catch a little sleep to-night, if we can, since to-morrow there may be no opportunity of so doing afforded."

He wrapped his cloak about him as he spoke, and lay down, turning, like an old soldier, his feet towards the fire. I was not slow, so far, in following his example; whilst, in actually yielding up my senses to the influence of "tired nature's sweet restorer," I have reason to believe that I considerably preceded him.

Long before the first streaks of dawn appeared in the east, the troops were roused from their slumbers. Close columns of battalions being formed, we stood ready for any emergency till daylight came in, when, instead of an order to advance, as had confidently been anticipated, our people were desired to pile arms and dismiss. "So!" said Vernon to me, with a smile of peculiar good-humour on his countenance, "I told you as much. I judged that General Stuart was too prudent to commit himself, and you see

that I judged rightly; here our campaign began, and here it will end."

Though very unwilling to credit this, things certainly took a turn which went a great way towards persuading me that Vernon was not deceived. Not a hint was dropped as to ulterior operations. On the contrary, the engineers immediately set to work, stamping out the *encein*te of a redoubt, and picketing its ditches,—in the erection of which it speedily appeared that we were about to be employed,—whilst multitudes of proclamations ready prepared for the purpose in Palermo were intrusted to any peasant who approached our camp.

Vernon was now more than ever satisfied that the expedition had been undertaken more with a view of justifying British policy to the world, than under the idea that any positive benefit would accrue from it. His spirits seemed to rise in proportion as the correctness of his theory received proof; and he even began to quiz us unmercifully on what he was pleased to term our fire-eating propensities. "So, gentlemen," said he, "you who came on shore big with the anticipation of transmitting your names to latest posterity as heroes of the first order, how like you the aspect which affairs begin to wear? As for me, I am a poor ambitionless wretch, and can endure our present crosses with patience; but I am really sorry for you, indeed I am."

We were thus employed during the whole of the 2nd, and a considerable portion of the 3rd; bringing our redoubt very near to its completion, and receiving several bands of half-armed banditti which came in one after another with tidings, more or less correct, of the position and movements of the enemy. To these General Stuart naturally paid at least as much attention as they were supposed to deserve; but it was not till the afternoon of the latter day was far advanced, that such intelligence as he deemed authentic reached him. Then, however, he heard, that General Regnier, at the head of four thousand infantry, three hundred cavalry, and a formidable train of artillery, was in full march towards him; that he occupied a position *not far from* the village of Maida, where he was in hourly

expectation of a reinforcement of three thousand fresh troops; and that it was his firm design, in case that corps arrived in time, to attack the British camp at an early hour in the morning.

With a promptitude for which he cannot be sufficiently commended, General Stuart instantly ordered his people under arms. The order was obeyed with the utmost alacrity; and before we could very well surmise why we had thus been summoned from our ordinary occupations, the line of march was formed and we were *en route*.

Midnight must have been close at hand, when the head of the column reached a spot, where the river Amato, a clear mountain stream, falls into the sea. It was an open plain, covered with fresh grass, which afforded no cover of any kind, nor the possession of any advantageous ground to an army; but being within an easy march of the position which the enemy were understood to occupy, our general determined to halt here till dawn. The word accordingly passed for the different regiments to form along the margin of the stream; the pickets were pushed across by the fords, which at this season were numerous and easy; and the arms being piled, our people lay down without lighting fires, in the order in which, if called upon, they would have stood.

I was preparing to follow the example of my comrades, and to seek refreshment in a sound sleep, when I felt some one pull me gently by the skirt of my coat, and on looking up I immediately recognised Vernon. He stood over me with a countenance which exhibited, in the moonlight, symptoms of great uneasiness; and in an agitated and hurried tone, he begged of me to rise and follow him. I did so without a moment's hesitation, and we walked along the river's brink till we had cleared the bivouac, and passed even the line of advanced sentries; when my conductor, stopping short, sat down upon the grassy bank, and invited me to do the same. It was not without a sense of strong surprise that I obeyed him; but I did obey him almost instinctively, exactly as the child obeys its nurse, or the hound its master.

For several seconds after we had seated ourselves, a profound silence was maintained, neither party speaking,

nor, if I could judge of Vernon's feelings by my own, desiring to speak. On my part, indeed, curiosity, not to mention any more influential principle, was too busy to permit me to begin the conversation. By degrees, however, this state of restraint wore away. Vernon, after gazing for a while upon the stream as it rolled by, appeared to master by a violent effort some secret repugnance, and turning abruptly, and, as it seemed, sharply towards me, said—

"You have not forgotten what passed between us on the first night of our landing?"

"Certainly not," replied I. "Our conversation was of too serious and striking a nature to be thus easily forgotten."

"You remember then," continued he, "that I pledged myself to open my mind to you in the event of affairs assuming the aspect which they actually wear?"

"I remember it perfectly," answered I, "and all that is necessary to be added is, my entreaty, that if in any way I can be serviceable to you, you will command me."

"Thanks, Section!" replied Vernon, rising as he spoke; "a thousand thanks for that kind offer. There is not a doubt that you can serve me—essentially, vitally serve me if you choose; the only question is, whether you will perform the part that I would impose upon you."

"It is not, I trust necessary," said I, "for me to assert, that whatever one man of honour can do for another I will do for you. We have known each other too long, and loved each other too well, for you to doubt this; and permit me to add, Vernon, that I scarcely thank you for the insinuation which the latter part of your speech implies."

Vernon turned from me as I spoke, and walked about twenty or thirty paces along the water's edge. He then stopped short, wheeled round, and so continued to pace backwards and forwards for several minutes without answering. At last he stopped.

"You do me wrong, Section," said he, "much wrong, if you imagine that I distrust your friendship. I am quite convinced that you would hazard your life for me; but I *dare not* hope that you will do what I am impelled to *request.*"

ave said already," replied I, "that there is nothing
a man of honour can do that I will not at least at-
n your service."
n Vernon turned from me, and walked with a hur-
ce to the limits of his old bounds. But his pro-
this time was more brief than before.
n you keep a secret?" said he, in a low and husky

n I?" answered I: "is it you, Vernon, that doubt

d can you so far command your feelings as still to
vourably of him who communicates it, even though
mmunication be of a nature the most repulsive to
ejudices?"
sed for an instant, and then said, "As I am quite
ed that you can disclose nothing capable of sinking
in my estimation, I promise you that the mere op-
of what you may say to prejudices, no matter how
rooted or long cherished, shall in no respect inter-
h the intimacy that subsists between us."
on seemed relieved by this declaration. He once
sumed his seat by my side; and after a struggle
ie scarcely seemed anxious to conceal, he thus

—

ink it is hardly possible for you not to be in some
prepared for the humiliating confession which I am
) make. So many opportunities of diving into the
have presented themselves, that if you have not
fathomed it, you must be by many degrees less
an I take you to be; but that, I am satisfied, is
case. Section, I am a coward, constitutionally and
bly a coward. Nay, start not," continued he,
his hand upon my shoulder, as if to repress a move-
which I had involuntarily given way; "shrink not
e, as you value the peace of a wretch, already suf-
loathsome in his own eyes; but at least hear me out
ou abandon me. You have often rallied me on the
ice which I exhibited to speak of Egypt, and the
d glories of the British Army employed there. You
peatedly questioned me about events of which

ought to have been both able and willing to give you a minute detail; and more than once you have chid me for my apparent backwardness to sound my own praises. I can hardly believe that you were sincere in so doing. It is scarcely possible that a soldier could so far deceive himself as to credit that a comrade would hang back from detailing his past services, were they worthy to be recounted. You always expressed yourself with so much seeming candour, that for a while I deluded myself into the persuasion that you did not see through the miserable subterfuge with which I sought to blind you. For some time back, however, I am convinced that you knew me all along. You satisfied me of that before we quitted Sicily; and therefore I have the less reluctance in confessing to you, as I do now, that I am a coward."

Vernon stopped here, partly to recover breath, and partly to combat against an excess of agitation which threatened to overwhelm him. Perhaps I ought to have said something by way of cheering him; indeed I felt at the moment that such would have been no more than common humanity;—yet I could not. My lips refused to utter an articulate sound; and I sat like one upon whom some tremendous calamity has fallen—so tremendous as to deprive him, at least for the moment, of the use of his faculties. Vernon's silence was not, however, of long continuance. After gasping once or twice for breath, he went on, his tones becoming more and more firm as he proceeded, till at last he spoke as a man may be supposed to speak who knows that he is undone, yet dares to look ruin in the face.

"The earliest recollections which come back upon me serve to prove, that in pronouncing myself constitutionally a coward, I fall into no error. I remember well that even at school I studiously avoided all grounds of quarrel; that I never took part in any enterprise which threatened to lead me or my companions into danger,—not, mark you, from the elements, for of these I have ever been by some inexplicable *caprice* of nature fearless; but of a rencounter with lads of *my* own age, far less with such as were, or appeared to be, *my* superiors in strength and activity, I ever entertained

the most overwhelming dread. It has been said that cowards are generally cruel, and even quarrelsome. Such was never my case; I always possessed discretion enough to be aware, that my only chance of impunity lay in meriting a character for goodnature and gentleness; and that, from my infancy, I have uniformly supported. How far this has been the case in manhood, you yourself may judge; I can only assure you, that in childhood and early youth the case was not different.

"How I came to embrace the profession of arms, conscious all the while of the infirmity under which I laboured, it would not, perhaps, be easy to say. Vanity, I believe,—the vain desire of dressing gaily, of being an object of admiration among women, and mixing familiarly with men, was the principal motive which actuated myself; whilst my relatives were guided solely by a consideration of what they conceived to be my best interests. The rapidity with which I have been pushed forward may satisfy you that I possessed no common influence at the Horse Guards—which it was esteemed an act of folly not to use; and I was gazetted into the —— regiment as soon as I had attained the age when boys are usually allowed to bear the king's commission.

"For some months after joining, no event befel calculated to draw my real character into the notice of others, or to force the conviction of its reality upon myself. My brother officers being in general men of liberal education and gentlemanly habits, grounds of dissension, rarely, if ever, arose amongst us; and if by accident some little misunderstanding did occur, the friendly interference of men truly brave failed not to bring matters to an amicable adjustment. By this means all swaggering, as well as a disposition, not universally scouted in the army, of referring disputes to the arbitration of the pistol, were avoided, and we lived in perfect harmony, like members of the same family.

It happened at last, that the course of service brought us into the same cantonments with a corps which acted upon a principle *widely the reverse*. These gentlemen, tenacious *of their rights one towards* another, were doubly so in their

dealings with strangers; and a bitter feeling soon arose between them and us. This, as a matter of course, led to disagreements, as disagreements led to challenges, and challenges to duels; till in the end, the officers of the two corps never met except to quarrel, nor parted till after the preliminaries of one or more rencontres had been arranged. I need not tell you with what care and assiduity I struggled to keep clear of such scrapes. I would frame a thousand excuses for withdrawing myself from a company into which a member of the hostile regiment was likely to obtrude; and when I found myself unavoidably drawn into collision with them, I studiously shunned such subjects as were calculated to provoke. Nay, I went further than this. I have sat—I own it with shame—in affected abstraction, whilst observations were hazarded, such as no other officer in our corps would have tolerated; and rejoiced that the persons advancing them retained so much of prudence or good breeding about them, as to abstain from offering to myself individually the insults which they heaped upon my regiment. But even this care, unremitting as it was, proved not wholly successful.

"I was at the play one night, and took my seat, together with the friend who accompanied me, in the front row of one of the most conspicuous boxes in the house. We came in rather late; that is to say, the first act of the piece was drawing to a close; and as the house was tolerably crowded in other places, I cannot deny that we were surprised at finding these very desirable places unoccupied; still, as no warning was given that they belonged to others, we experienced little hesitation in taking possession of them. We had hardly done so, when two officers belonging to the rival regiment deliberately quitted their seats in a box opposite, and coming round, demanded, in no very gentle terms, that we would resign our places. From my soul I believe that I should have complied with their demand, in spite of the irretrievable disgrace with which the step must have covered me, had I been permitted to obey the impulses of *my own feeling*; but the friend who accompanied me, *though* neither older nor more experienced than myself, *knew better* what was due to the honour of both. He re-

remptorily refused in his own name and in mine to move. Cards, as usual, were exchanged, and the intruders, both of whom appeared to be in a state of considerable excitement from wine, departed.

"How the amusements of that night passed off, I retain not the most remote remembrance. I had no sooner thrust my opponent's card into my pocket, than every sense became deadened, and every thought absorbed in the one horrible idea, that from the difficulties by which I was beset, no mode of escape could be devised; and that I must either appear in the field, or abandon for ever honour and advancement, and that which I valued to the full as much as either—the good opinion of my friends. Section, you are a brave man, and cannot therefore conceive the nature of the feeling which that dreadful idea excited. Pain it can scarcely be called—at least not acute pain. No, it was a thousand times more intolerable; it was a deadening stupifying, overwhelming consciousness of utter ruin; to be avoided only by an exertion which I knew myself to be incapable of making. By what voluntary blindness my companion abstained from penetrating into the real cause of my agitation, I have always been at a loss to conceive. It is true, that he was at once the best-hearted and the least suspicious mortal with whom it has ever been my fate to become acquainted; yet my excuse of indisposition was at once so gross and so common, that even he must have been puzzled how to receive it. He did receive it, however, with great apparent frankness, and quitted the house, at my request, some time betore the curtain dropped.

"It was agreed between us, as we proceeded homewards, that as no insulting language had been employed on our parts, nor any of which we could legitimately lay hold on the parts of our adversaries, it was not our business to send the message, however prompt we might be in accepting it when sent. I say, this was agreed between us; but in truth I had nothing to say in the matter, giving myself up entirely to the guidance of my friend, and professing heartily to concur in his suggestions. Yet there *came a ray of hope* upon me, as soon as this line of *conduct had been* chosen. It was at least possible how-

ever slender the probability, that our adversaries, on recovering the use of their senses, might perceive that their ground of quarrel was far from being just; and hence that they might content themselves, as we were disposed to do, by waiting for their challenge. In this case, my honour might be saved, yet no risk run; and I felt as if a mountain had been removed from my chest as I contemplated it.

"But my hopes were doomed to prove baseless. There was too much rancour in the animosity of the regiments as corporate bodies, to permit private feeling to have any weight, Our brother officers were no sooner informed of the rencontre, than they declared that matters ought not to rest as they were; but that in the event of the intruders hanging back, upon us devolved the necessity of giving the challenge. There is no arguing against a decision given by the majority of officers in your own corps. Whilst my friend freely and, I doubt not, cheerfully acceded to the expressed sentence, I could not presume to question its propriety; so I retired to my apartment, affecting—and but lamely affecting—a satisfaction, which I was very far from being able to experience.

"I pass over the history of that tremendous night. Let it suffice to inform you, that more than once the thought of instant flight, at all costs and hazards, occurred to me; and that it was only by an exertion, of which I did not believe myself capable, that I resisted the desire which grew out of it. As to sleep, that was out of the question; I never lay down, but paced my room, from corner to corner, in a state which beggars all power of language to pourtray.

"I was thus occupied, and the first rays of the sun were begining to make their way through the crevices of my shutters, when a loud knock at the door roused me. There was but one reason to be assigned for such an interruption at this hour; and to that, as you may believe, my excited fancy turned at once: the friend of the officer, with whom I had exchanged cards, was, without doubt, at hand, and the challenge must be declined or accepted. I gasped for *breath,* as the appalling thought occurred to me; and so

far from hastening to admit the visiter, I reeled back, in a species of conscious fit, powerless as an infant, into the chair. The stranger knocked again. I struggled hard to recover some portion of self-possession, and I succeeded. 'Who is there?' demanded I. You may judge how I felt, when the voice not of a stranger but of the adjutant, made answer, by requesting instant admission. I sprang to the door, undid the fastening, and the adjutant stood before me.

"'What! up and dressed already?' exclaimed he, surveying me from head to foot with an approving glance—'or, by heavens! in the very garb of yesterday! This is as it ought to be; and Heaven knows that no man would more willingly lend a helping hand in carrying you honourably through the affair than myself; but mine, I regret to say, is a far less pleasant duty. Vernon I am sorry to tell you, that what passed yesterday in the theatre, passed under the eye of the general, who, by some means or other, has discovered all your names, and I am come by his orders to inform you, that you are to consider yourself under arrest. The same message has been sent to all the parties, and you are to meet at the general's quarters at twelve o'clock to-day.

"What a communication was this to a man labouring under the feelings which overwhelmed me! I could have caught the adjutant to my heart, and poured out such blessings upon his head as the poor criminal, respited on the scaffold, pours upon the head of the messenger who brings his reprieve. I could have said or done anything, however extravagant or unworthy; nor was it without a violent struggle that I suppressed the impulse which would have led to such results. But I did suppress it. I even affected to receive the official communication with the deepest distress; and I went so far as to throw out hints as to the practibility of eluding it. Here, however, I found that a sense of duty far outbalanced every other consideration.

"'No, my friend,' replied the adjutant, 'however readily I may enter into your chagrin, and lament that there should be cause for it, I can neither advise nor even wink at a breach of military law. You are *bonâ fide* a prisoner: as such you must continue till regularly released, and that,

I apprehend, will not be the case till you have mutually given and accepted apologies. But do not distress yourself. Other opportunities will not be wanting of chastising these fellows for their insolence.' He retired as he said this, leaving me in a frame of mind diametrically the reverse of that into which he imagined I would fall."

CHAPTER IV.

"You have doubtless anticipated the result of this adventure, and of the interview with the general to which it led. On repairing to his presence at the appointed hour, I found there, not my own comrade only, but the two persons who had picked a quarrel with us in the theatre; to all of whom the brave veteran read a lecture such as the circumstances of the case seemed to demand. We were then desired to make mutual explanations, which could in no degree hurt the feelings of either party, or induce one to assume an ascendancy over the other: after which, we shook hands, and were dismissed to our quarters. But the affair ended not here. That very evening there came an order, directing us to march at an early hour in the morning to a station many miles distant, where we continued quietly and happily for some weeks.

"The adventure of which I have just spoken, though it redounded to my advantage, and served to impress my messmates with a favourable opinion of my courage, brought more forcibly than ever to my own mind the conviction—that Nature had formed me a coward. It would have been an act of common prudence, under such circumstances, had I quietly withdrawn from a profession, to fulfil the duties of which I knew myself incapable; and more than once I seriously pondered upon the measure. But I found my relatives so decidedly opposed to it, that I gave up my own *judgment*, out of a very mistaken and unfortunate deference *for theirs*. Yet I much question whether I should not have

carried my point after all, had I not about this time received promotion,—being appointed to a lieutenantcy in the ——— regiment, then serving under Sir Ralph Abercrombie in the Mediterranean. In an evil hour I consented to join that corps. I set sail from Portsmouth in a frigate for the purpose, and overtook my new regiment at Malta, just as it had returned to the transports, and was preparing to follow the fleet on its progress to Egypt.

"I pass by the particulars of that voyage. It would but ill accord with the motive which prompts me to lay before you these details at all, were I to speak of pleasant days at sea, or days not less pleasant at Marmorice, on the coast of Caramania. Enough is done when I remind you, that after a sojourn of some weeks at the latter place, we once more put to sea, and arrived in the Bay of Aboukir on the 2d of March, 1801. One event, however, in which I felt myself peculiarly interested, must not be omitted. At Marmorice, the ——— regiment was joined by a new lieutenant-colonel, who had recently served as major in the corps from which I had been recently promoted, and with whom, whilst attached to the latter corps, I had been on terms of strict intimacy.—You saw that individual, Section.—It was he whose presence at our mess affected me so violently on a late occasion; and though you expressed astonishment at the circumstance then, you will neither express nor experience a feeling of the kind, as soon as you are made aware of the sequel of my story.

"I have said that we reached the Bay of Aboukir on the 2d of March, which we entered with a signal flying from the mast-head of every ship of war, for the troops to prepare for an immediate disembarkation. The enthusiasm displayed by persons of all ranks as soon as the telegraph was explained to them, I cannot pretend to describe. The very air rang with their shouts: yet on me no other effect was produced than that which ought to have been anticipated. I saw before me the prospect of a violent and sudden death,—and I saw no more. You may judge, therefore, of the extent of my satisfaction, when a strong breeze from the north *sprang up, causing a surf* to run on the drifting sand beach *through which no boat* could live; and the flags which had

floated like meteors in the air, were one after another lowered.

"Though quite aware that the dreaded moment must come, and that delay must render it doubly terrible, I was nevertheless so completely under the dominion of terror, that I blessed Providence for the respite, and prayed fervently that the gale at which others murmured, might never lull.

"In this manner nearly an entire week was spent. At last, however, the gale moderated; and towards evening on the 7th, a signal was again made, that the landing would take place on the morrow. Few preparations were required on this occasion, all things having been put in order long ago; but these few were sufficient to deprive of all self-command a wretch so lost to every manly feeling as myself. The boats were no sooner hoisted out than the last remnant of prudence forsook me; and I adopted the usual course of cowards on such occasions—by complaining of violent indisposition.

"'I hope not,' said the commanding officer, whose private attachment induced him to look with a favourable eye even upon such a proceeding as this. 'The present is a moment when no soldier ought to be sick, and you, Vernon, will, I am sure, fight manfully against disease, rather than desert your comrades.'

"To say that I felt humbled by such an address, would be to convey but a very inadequate picture of my state of mind. I ran below, threw myself on my berth, and almost resolved to encounter every risk rather than disappoint the good opinion which the colonel had formed of me.

"It might be about two o'clock in the morning of the 8th, when a rocket, thrown up from the admiral's ship, warned those embarked that the long looked-for hour had arrived. You must know that the fleet lay at this time in a long double line, having three armed ships as a sort of advanced guard just within gunshot of the shore, round which the boats, after loading with troops, had received *directions* to assemble, that all might pull for land at once *and in* order. The distance from our transport to the

appointed rendezvous could not fall short of three miles; whilst many others were full eight miles off, and some even further removed. Much time, therefore, would necessarily be wasted in proceeding thither; and as all the boats of the fleet, as well flats as others, were incapable of conveying more than six thousand men at a time, it occurred to me, that if I could avoid being thrust into the first division, I might escape,—the dangers of the landing, at least, might be evaded. I resolved to adopt that course at all risks. My absence from my proper company not being observed in the dark, I had the satisfaction of hearing it row off, securing myself all the while below; nor did I again venture upon deck till the lessening tumult assured me that I could not, if I would, make my cries heard. I then ran up the companion, affecting the utmost apprehension lest I should be left behind; and I acted the part of one chagrined and mortified with so much address, as to convince those about me that I was what I pretended to be.

"As I now felt myself secure, at least for a time, my self-possession so far returned, that I was able to watch the progress of that memorable enterprise with considerable coolness, and even interest. The night was calm and serene, and though there was no moon in the sky, thousands of stars shed an indistinct glimmer over the bosom of the deep. By the light of these I could perceive boats moving in every direction; and the perfect silence which prevailed enabled me distinctly to overhear the hollow sound of the oars as they dipped into the water. Who but myself could have laboured at such a moment under the influence of bodily terror? Yet to bodily terror was I so much a slave, as not only to feel nothing of the enthusiasm which inspired others, but absolutely to hug myself on the success of my scheme.—Section, when I look back to that period of my history, I loathe myself,—how then can I expect that you will not loathe me also?

"Day dawned at length; and the spectacle that then opened was one which no man who happened to behold it will ever forget. Already had a large proportion of the *flotilla assembled round the* advanced ships; the remainder, *pulling with all their* might, were gradually closing in

whilst on shore I could distinctly perceive, by the aid of my telescope, columns of French troops mustering to receive them. And now, about half-past eight o'clock, the entire division was mustered, and a regular line, extending, perhaps, a mile, or something less, from one flank to the other, was formed. For an instant all was still, when, in obedience to some signal which I was too far removed accurately to observe, the whole began to advance. Coward as I was, and still ingrossed with plans for my own personal security, even I, could not but gaze with breathless interest upon the scene. On the flotilla went, covered by a couple of bomb-vessels, which instantly began to throw shells upon the beach; and headed by several gun-boats and armed launches, which, as they approached the shore, likewise opened their fire. Not so the enemy. One half the passage must have been completed ere they returned a shot; but when they did return it, the effect was perfectly appalling. The Castle of Aboukir, and the entire line of sand-hills, which guard, as it were, the beach, became at once enveloped in a cloud of smoke; and the roar resembled that of a thunder-storm amidst the valleys of Mount Etna.

"As there was not a breath of wind to disperse the smoke, which hung in dense masses over the scene of action, it was only at intervals that I succeeded in obtaining a glimpse of the effect produced by this murderous salutation; but when I did obtain it, the sight was horrible. The whole surface of the sea in front, in rear, and around the flotilla, boiled and bubbled like water in a heated cauldron; shells burst in the air, and a boat struck from time to time would totally disappear. But not for a moment was the faintest symptom of dismay exhibited, or a check given to the steady and forward course of the rowers. At last the leading barges touched the land, and a blaze of musketry ensued.

"Of what followed I cannot pretend to give any account. I saw but masses of people moving hither and thither, in the midst of volumes of smoke, illuminated from time to time by the blaze of firearms. I heard only the roar of cannon and rattle of musketry, broken in upon for a brief

second by loud cheers;—but as to the details of the action, these you must learn elsewhere. Of one fact, however, and to me it was an important one, I was, indeed, a witness. The bearing of the fire proved to me that the enemy were repulsed, and its gradual suspension led me to hope, that they had sustained a decisive and signal defeat.

"In the meanwhile the seamen having gallantly conveyed the first division on shore, lost no time in pushing back for the second. I beheld the boats gradually near us, with a desperation that rendered me for the moment proof even against fear; and I sprang into one of the boats with a readiness which gained for me the applause of all who witnessed it. Heaven knows it was the act not of a brave but of a mad man—of one who saw no escape from danger, and therefore dared to face it; and my proceedings immediately afterwards might have satisfied even the most prejudiced, that I was influenced by no true feeling of a soldier. I would have thrown myself down in the bottom of the flat, had not its crowded state hindered. But I shrank up into a corner, bending my head at every shot, though none reached within many yards of us; till the very privates began at last to make remarks, and the rowers to mock me. What were such insults to me? I felt them not, nay, I hardly noticed them; I saw only my own danger, through the magnifying lens of excessive terror.

"Noon was near at hand, and all firing except from the castle had ceased, when we gained the shore; but the spectacles which met us there, were certainly not of a nature to reconcile one like me to the trade of war. The beach was covered with dead and dying men, caps, firelocks, fragments of boats, and other evidences of recent battle. My blood curdled as I gazed upon them; I became like one deranged; and instead of paying attention to the men, or assisting to form them, I ran towards the sand-hills, anxious only to escape from horrors, the proximity of which threw me into a state of frenzy. As *my own company was* already in advance, this strange *conduct on my part* excited the less attention. It

remarked, indeed, that my manner might have been more collected, and that, seeing I had chosen to attach myself to the second division, I ought to have acted as if I really belonged to it; but soldiers are seldom harsh in their criticisms so long as a comrade's face is to the front, and my agitation was liberally attributed to the excessive zeal of an enthusiastic tyro.

"I came up with the advanced portion of my regiment just in time to obtain a glimpse of the French army, now in full but orderly retreat along the lake. Nothing could be finer than that movement. They marched in column, carrying off all their guns with them which had not fallen during the action into the hands of the conquerors, and covered in the rear by a small body of well-mounted cavalry. But to me the sight was chiefly gratifying, because it seemed to promise no immediate renewal, at all events, of hostilities. I took courage as this idea arose in my mind; and when congratulated by the commanding officer on the promptitude with which I had shaken off my illness, I contrived to answer like one who really felt what he said. But I have every reason to believe that even thus early he rated me at my true value; and the lapse of a few days served to set all doubts and surmises at rest.

"As soon as the whole of the second division came up, the army pushed forward in columns of regiments by brigades; not, however, for the purpose of pursuing the enemy, but merely that a new and more advantageous position might be assumed. This done, we again halted, forming into four lines, which extended from Lake Aboukir on the left, to the sea on the right; and here, during the 9th, the 10th, the 11th, and part of the 12th, we remained inactive. On the 12th, however, an advance took place, with the tide of which, as I was now irrevocably in its vortex, I was swept along.

"It might be about ten or eleven o'clock in the morning of this day, when Sir Ralph Abercrombie made his appearance in camp, and the troops, in obedience to orders previously issued, stood to their arms. There was at this time no enemy, nor the trace of an enemy, in our front. The French, after the affair of the 8th, showed not so

much as a patrol of cavalry; and hence no one ventured to hazard a conjecture as to the moment when we were likely to fall in with them. As long as matters continued thus uncertain, even I contrived to wear a countenance not dissimilar to that worn by those about me; and hoping, I scarce know what, almost as vehemently as I feared, I stepped forward. The day was intensely hot, and the reflection of the sun's rays from the sandy plain which we traversed, produced a violent effect not only upon our sight, but our respiration. Nevertheless we pressed on, all, as it seemed, in the highest possible spirits, and all eager for a fresh opportunity of putting the valour of our rivals to the test. Fortune had determined not to keep us in this respect long in suspense. Towards evening the French army became visible, strongly posted among some sand-hills, and covered in front by a grove of tall and graceful palm-trees, about four miles in advance of the ancient city of Alexandria, our approach to which they seemed resolute to dispute. Of course an immediate attack was anticipated, for which every man and officer professed to pant; but our leader, more experienced as well as judicious than his followers, determined otherwise. Having closely reconnoitred the enemy's dispositions, he ordered the columns to halt; and we bivouacked that night within gunshot of the French outposts.

"I am not conscious of having exhibited, during the progress of this preliminary operation, any signs of that weakness which I am far from denying that I felt. That I must have done so, however, and done it in a manner not to be overlooked, I soon received the most satisfactory testimony,—if, indeed, I may so express myself with reference to an interview, the remembrance of which causes me to blush even when alone. Our regiment had scarcely taken possession of its ground, when the orderly for the day delivered a message, the purport of which was, that the colonel desired to see me. I obeyed, in a frame of mind such as a gally-slave need not envy, and followed my conductor to a spot, where, far apart from all interruption, my *former friend* waited to receive me.

"*Having* ordered the man back to the lines, and kept

silence till he was beyond the reach of ordinary voices, the colonel, in a tone of mingled firmness and affection, entered at once upon the subject which was ever uppermost in my mind. He alluded with regret to the indisposition which had so suddenly and so unaccountably seized me at the moment of debarkation; he stated his knowledge of my wild and unsoldierlike conduct in the boat, and on the the beach; and finally he asserted, that with his own eyes he had this day remarked in me that which he could not remark twice in any officer under his command. 'Vernon,' continued he, 'I will speak plainly. If my suspicions be well-founded, and your nerves are so constituted as not to withstand the shock of battle, it is high time, for your own sake, that you quit the service. I have sent for you at present to inform you, that to-morrow the army will be engaged. If you feel that you cannot do your duty, there are means of sending you back quietly, yet screening you from shame, to the fleet; and my personal regard for you is such, that I will exert them. If you have reason to hope,—I say not if you are certain,—but if you have reason to hope that you are not what some suspect, then let my words keep their place in your memory. The eyes of the whole regiment will be on you, and one false step, one attempt to flinch, must ruin you beyond the hope of redemption.'

"I cannot pretend to delineate what I felt, when the brave and good man, having ended his address, paused to receive my answer. Had there been about me one spark of common manhood, I should have at once assured him that he mistook my character, and grasping at the opportunity presented of wiping away a stain, as yet imperfectly inflicted, I should have determined, and adhered to the determination, of courting danger on the morrow, wherever she was to be found. Section, I did neither of these things. Personal fear, the dread of death or mutilation, overcame all dread of disgrace; and after a faint struggle, I expressed my readiness to return to the fleet. O that the earth had opened her mouth, and swallowed me at that moment! The remembrance of it is as a whip of scorpions, tormenting me day and night. I have brooded over it when

awake, and dreamed of it in my slumbers, till reason has all but forsaken me; yet I was calm, and even collected, when I uttered the damning confession, that I could not do my duty, nor enter a field of battle. The colonel turned from me in coldness and disgust. 'Be it so, Mr. Vernon,' said he; 'but from this hour never show yourself at the mess of the —— regiment. You will find your name in orders as the officer appointed to take charge of the commissariat and purveyor's stores, of which the depôt will always be a march or two in rear of the column. To that creditable office I leave you; and the sooner you can effect an exchange into some other corps, the better.'

"I hurried back to my comrades, not, indeed, callous to the degradation which had fallen upon me, but too happy in the prospect of personal impunity to give to it more than a passing thought. They remarked upon my change of manner, and demanded the reason, which I, of course, took care to explain in a manner widely at variance from the truth; but there is no ground for deceiving either myself or you into the persuasion that the truth was long concealed from them. We were yet on the subject when the orderly-book was handed round, containing a paragraph, which intimated to me that I was to return to the coast without delay, and take charge of the stores till relieved.

"'We wish you joy,' said my companions, as they handed me the volume.

"'Of what?' asked I, in affected ignorance.

"'Of an appointment, doubtless, very much to your taste.'

"I ran my eye hastily over the volume, and would have given utterance to a burst of pretended indignation, had not some remnant of shame checked me. I looked up with that confused stare which a man, conscious of guilt, never fails to employ, and seeing their eyes fixed upon me in penetrating glances, I shrank from them. I rose without saying a word; and humbled to the dust, yet too much of a coward to risk a life no longer worth preserving, I slunk, rather than marched, to the rear.

"*Such is a correct detail* of my services in Egypt; and *now can you wonder* that I have always shown an indispo-

sition to touch upon the subject? No, Section: with these purveyor's stores I remained, during the entire campaign, an object of abhorrence to myself, and contempt to others, till an attack of ophthalmia fortunately furnished an excuse for an abrupt return to England. Yet was my promotion still permitted to go on. A company had been purchased for me, during my absence from home, into your regiment, where, up to the present moment, I have enjoyed almost uninterrupted happiness. But the worst of all remains yet to be stated,—I am still a coward,—still as palpable and absolute a coward as ever. Yes, Section, though I have reasoned with myself a thousand times on the subject, and come occasionally to the conclusion, that it were better to perish at once than live despised, I cannot, now that the moment of trial is at hand, count upon my own firmness. I tremble for to-morrow. Yet I will go into action, let the consequences be what they may; and it is to avert the most tremendous of these, that I now throw myself on your mercy. Will you befriend me?"

It was not without a violent struggle that I succeeded in stammering out an assurance, that whatever I could do to aid him should be done.

"Then hear my solemn request," continued he: "Should I, in the hour of danger, exhibit signs of weakness, remind me that more than life is at stake:—should your remonstrance fail of restoring me, shoot me dead on the spot. I wish to die, and I would rather die by your hand than my own."

You will readily believe that I neither gave, nor thought of giving, a pledge to commit murder,—far less meditated an act so desperate; but I exerted myself strenuously to allay his irritation, and to give a tone to his spirits. I reminded him that during the Egyptian campaign he was little more than a boy, and that many a boy, after shrinking from danger, has proved himself in the end a hero. But my arguments were of no avail. He continued firmly impressed with the conviction, that in to-morrow's battle *his character* would be sacrificed; whilst I lay down under *no very* pleasant apprehension that his fears would prove *too well* founded.

CHAPTER V.

NOTWITHSTANDING the painful effect of such an interview as that just described, my sleep was sound and refreshing, and suffered no interruption, till a general stir amongst those about me gave notice that the hour of muster was at hand. I rose without a moment's delay, and placed myself as usual on the flank of the company. Here I looked round, not without something akin to misgiving, for Vernon; but my doubts had done him injustice. He was in his proper station, if not active and alert as became him on such an occasion, nevertheless perfectly quiet, and, as it appeared, collected; though of the expression of his countenance it was impossible to judge, on account of the darkness. Still I was sincerely rejoiced to see him there; and, for the first time since his distressing confession was made, I ventured to encourage a hope that even now his case might not be desperate.

Day dawned at length with the rapidity and splendour which accompanies its approach on the coast of Calabria, and the pickets being called in, the line of march formed, the word was passed quietly to advance, and in five minutes after the whole army was in motion.

The Amato, which ran immediately in our front, is a shallow mountain stream, fordable in almost every direction, except at the season of floods. No difficulty, therefore, was found in passing it, after which our little column took a direction somewhat more to the right, and plunged at once into the valley. And now the panorama became at every step more and more sublime, as well as interesting. We found ourselves at the gorge of a long strip of level country, hemmed in on either hand by hills, and laid out in fields of luxuriant corn, rich meadows, and flourishing orange-groves. But the object which soon drew to itself the principal share of our attention, was the French army. *We had no sooner made* the turn, and faced up, as it were

towards the Adriatic, than it opened upon us, and a front more imposing has seldom been shown by an enemy.

You are, doubtless, aware that General Regnier had been joined the evening before by the three thousand men of whom he was in expectation, and that his force at this moment amounted to seven thousand infantry, three hundred cavalry, and a considerable train of field artillery. Of the fact of that junction we had not been informed; yet a single glance sufficed to assure us, that the corps now opposed to us must greatly exceed our own, if not in composition, at all events in numbers. Its position, too, was an exceedingly striking one; it stood in columns of regiments, with guns in the intervals, and cavalry in squadrons near them, on the summit of an elevated ridge,—a bend in the Amato sweeping across its front, and thick impervious woods covering its flanks.

What the French general's designs might be, we, of course, could not tell: his attitude was that of a man who had not yet come to a decision whether to give or receive the attack; but it was very evident that, on whatever course he might determine, the collision would be a tremendous one.

We were at this moment, as nearly as I can guess, about four miles from the base of the enemy's position. To reach it, we were necessitated to traverse a plain, during our progress through which every movement must be observed —I had almost said every file counted by the enemy; and there were those amongst us who ventured to suggest, that to press on, under circumstances so unfavourable, could tend to no fortunate result. Happily for the honour of the British arms such ideas were entertained neither by the general-in-chief nor by a single individual of rank. A short halt was made in order that a line of battle might be formed; and the following is the order into which the army was immediately distributed.

In the first line were placed the light brigade, the 78th and 81st regiments; the light troops holding the right, the *81st the* left, and the 78th the centre. With these were *appointed* to move a due proportion of artillery, of small

calibre, but admirably served. The second line, if I may so call it, consisted of General Cole's brigade, so disposed as to be out of the range of the first fire, but sufficiently at hand to support any portion of the front line which might seem to be pressed. The reserve, again, consisting of the 58th, and Watteville's regiments, brought up the rear, at a greater interval from the second brigade than it was from the first. Such were the arrangements made almost as soon as the proximity of the French army had been ascertained: and the event proved that they were as judicious as they were necessary.

Whilst these formations were going on, many an anxious eye was turned towards the enemy's camp, throughout which, almost at the same moment with our halt, a general commotion was seen to arise. The regiments and brigades, breaking off from their defensive order, were observed to form into three long columns, the heads of which were soon lost in the woods; and a notion gradually spread abroad that Regnier, confident in the numbers and courage of his troops, was about to abandon his strong ground, and meet us on the plain. Great was the joy manifested by persons of all ranks as soon as this report began to circulate. A fair field, with room enough, is all that a British soldier wants; and if these be granted, he very rarely counts upon the possibility of any other result besides a glorious one.

And now the word was given to advance. In a cool and deliberate manner, such as would have disgraced no parade-ground in England, the front line obeyed; the second, with the reserve, remaining with equal steadiness where they were, till the proposed interval had been made good. Then they also, one after the other, stepped forward, and the scene became as deeply and strikingly picturesque as it is possible for the human imagination to conceive. Nor did it obtain this character altogether from the warlike adjuncts, so to speak, thrown around it. Occurrences took place on that occasion which are very rarely to be met with, except, if we may believe our transatlantic warriors, *on the fields of India*; but which, let them happen where

they will, certainly heighten in no ordinary degree the interest of a battle field.

I told you some time ago that the valley of St. Euphemia was in a state of high cultivation, large portions of it being laid out in corn-fields. This being the season of autumn, numerous groups of reapers were scattered over them, who, instead of flying to the mountains, as might have been expected, laid down their sickles and became spectators of the strife. Our first line passed more than one of such groups, the individuals among which waved their hats, and cheered us loudly, each communicating all the information which he possessed, as to the numbers and designs of the enemy. But no great while elapsed ere intelligence on these heads, more to be relied upon than the reports of the country people, came upon us. As the enemy were in movement equally with ourselves, and the distance which originally divided us fell short of four miles, every instant brought the hostile lines nearer and nearer to each other; so that, in about half an hour after the simultaneous advance began, we were fairly in presence.

You can conceive nothing more imposing, nothing more animating, yet terrific, than the gradual approach of these armies. For some time after they crossed the river, the French were totally concealed from us, the plain being perfectly level, and covered with standing corn. Something less than a mile may have divided us, when the glitter of their bayonets began to appear. This was eagerly pointed out to us by the country people; but our men, having been cautioned to maintain a profound silence, seemed to pay no heed to it, marching forward in steady array, as if at a review. Now the tops of their caps began to rise above the corn-stalks; now the tread of feet and heavy roll of artillery were heard; and now a gun was fired. It was from the enemy, but did no execution. Still the battle may be said to have commenced; for, from that moment, the discharge of their field-pieces was incessant.

I had not been unmindful, in spite of the exciting circ*umstances* which surrounded me, of my promise of last

night. Though I could not absolutely abandon my own post, I nevertheless contrived to appear from time to time at Vernon's side, and to give him such encouragement as words can convey at a moment so awful. At first he appeared to profit by my hints; he thanked me as each was uttered; and once more stepped up to the line, from which, as it seemed involuntarily, he had begun to lag. As we neared the enemy, however, and the reapers warned us of what was about to happen, he became less and less attentive. His face was pale, his lips livid, his stare fixed and vacant, and the sense of hearing, at least the faculty of understanding, appeared to desert him. His only reply to my exhortations was now a ghastly smile, more horrible and more afflicting than I ever looked upon before or since. But when the enemy's fire opened, all self-possession abandoned him. It was to no purpose that I put him in mind that honour, fame, self-respect, every thing which a man values, or ought to value, was at stake. Three shots were not discharged ere he disappeared, and the regiment never saw him afterwards.

In the mean while, the opposing lines drew at every pace nearer and nearer, till at last each was enabled to command a full and perfect view of the other. The French came on with every show of confidence, to which, indeed, their preponderating numbers were well calculated to give birth; whilst our people pressed forward to meet them, not a whit more doubtful as to the result. And now our artillery began to open, with an effect which contrasted strongly with that produced by the enemy's cannonade. In general, the French gunners are excellent; they have given us ample reason for allowing this, and we have never denied it; but to-day their fire was as worthless as ever came from the merest recruits. Not one shot out of fifty took effect; almost all passing over our front line, and falling short of the second. It was not so with our pieces. Every shot told, and grape, shrapnel, and canister, swept away whole sections from the ranks that received it. You all know the effect which is produced upon an infantry line, when it witnesses the able practice of its own artillery. As each file of Frenchmen fell, our brave fellows raised a

shout of cruel, perhaps, but allowable triumph; and loud and frequent wrere the plaudits bestowed upon the gallant blue coats who so ably supported them. Nor was this the only circumstance from which our regiments, especially such as had hitherto seen no service, began to draw the most favourable auguries. It was observed that the French marched but indifferently; that they preserved an exceedingly irregular line, and straggled and wavered from side to side, as often as some trifling obstacle came in their way; from all which, our recruits deduced the natural conclusion, that they themselves were far better drilled, and therefore more perfect soldiers than the enemy. But events were assuming at every instant a more decisive turn. The lines were rapidly approximating; and not artillery only, but musketry and the bayonet, seemed on the eve of being brought into play.

The centres of the British and French armies might have been about two hundred and fifty yards apart, when the first musketry fire which had yet been heard, arose upon the right. It was a desultory tiraillade, and the skirmishers there having fallen in, were exchanging, as is their custom, long and uncertain shots. But the enemy seemed to treat it as a signal for general action. All at once they halted, closed in their ranks, and, after a moment's apparent hesitation, fired a volley. This we received without returning it, till we had reduced the intervening space to little more than a hundred and fifty yards, when we also halted, and our people poured in a regular and well-directed volley. Without a moment's pause they reloaded, (the enemy keeping up all the while an incessant rattle) and, with the same coolness which marked their previous salute, repeated it.

In the whole course of my military career, I never witnessed any thing more murderous than those discharges. Whilst on our side very few men had fallen, the clearing away of the smoke exhibited the French line torn, as it were, into fragments; huge gaps staring us in the face, *and the* whole of the ground being covered with killed and *wounded.* A loud shout gave testimony that the effect of *their* practice was not lost upon the British soldiers. In-

stead of repeating their fire, they brought their muskets to the charge, and at double-quick time rushed on.

The French are a brave people, and it is well known that from the charge of no nation besides our own have they ever recoiled; but the flashing of a British bayonet is a sight upon which, even thus early in the war, they had not learned to look with indifference. For a moment or two it seemed as if they would have stood the shock; they even cheered, or rather hallooed, after their own discordant fashion, and remained steady; but long before the collision took place their courage failed them. They faced to the right about, as if by word of command, and ran, though still preserving their line, to the rear. It is but justice to declare, that no set of officers could have exerted themselves more strenuously to check this not disorderly flight. They hurried from post, waved their swords over their heads shouted, seized their men by the collar, and, at last, when the second line was seen advancing to their support, succeeded in checking them. The enemy halted, wheeled round, and once more opened their fire. Nor did we immediately close upon them. Our own people were out of breath, though still as ardent as ever; and we commanded them to halt, not because they appeared reluctant to go on, but that they might recover their wind. This, however, was soon done; the little gaps in the line were filled up, and again, firing as we proceeded, we pushed against the double line of the enemy. Again was our threatened charge completely successful. Having waited to receive our final volley, the French gave way, and fled, this time, in awful confusion.

At this critical juncture, the French cavalry, which had not hitherto been engaged, dashed round the right of our line, and made a gallant effort to charge the regiments that were somewhat disordered in pursuit. They were received as they came on with a fire so destructive, that their horses would not face it; and the troopers, in spite of every effort to the contrary, were borne to the rear. Yet these were brave men, the very *élite* of the French army, as their subsequent *conduct* proved; for, finding that their chargers

were not to be managed, they cast them loose, and returned to the battle on foot.

Whilst the left and centre were thus nobly gathering laurels, the right was no less eminently successful, though brought into collision with the flower of the French infantry, its fifty-first Légére. There, indeed the action began under circumstances by no means the most promising; for a party of Corsican rangers, which had been sent out to skirmish, gave way almost as soon as attacked; but the British light infantry took no further notice of the matter, than to hoot, and pour forth execrations upon the fugitives as they passed. They then pressed forward to meet the French, who came on in full confidence of victory. The lines actually met, —some of the men on each side actually crossed bayonets, —but there was no regular push—the French gave way, and were scattered with prodigious slaughter.

The enemy being repulsed at every point, the fire began to slacken, when General Regnier, desperate with his losses, which were truly appalling, and anxious at all risks to redeem the day, resolved upon one more effort for victory. Whilst his own left and centre gave way beyond the possibility of recall, he moved several battalions whose order still remained, rapidly to the right, with the design of overwhelming, by the weight of a sudden charge, the left of the British army. He so far succeeded as to hinder General Cole's brigade, which was hurrying up to take its station in advance, from forming in a continuous line, and compelled them to throw back the left, at an angle of sixty degrees with the 81st. Nothing daunted by that circumstance, however, the brave grenadiers and the 27th opened their fire in the most magnificent manner; and sustained it with an animation, which soon gave General Regnier ground to tremble for the success of his well-arranged plan. But that success was rendered impossible, even more speedily than we could have anticipated, by a coincidence as well-timed as has ever occurred in war.

In describing the embarkation of the little army which sailed from Melazzo, I made mention only of the light company of the 20th regiment. That distinguished corps,

though equally with its light troops destined to share in the honour and hazard of the expedition, had been unavoidably left behind, in consequence of a deficiency of tonnage for its conveyance. The transports, however, had no sooner landed us, than they returned for the 20th and the cavalry, the former of which came up just in time to cover itself with glory, and to decide the fate of the day. Colonel Ross, seeing how matters went, formed his regiment with great presence of mind into several companies in the wood. With these he debouched upon the flank of the assailants, thus placing them between the fires of his own men and the grenadiers; and then with a spirit-stirring shout, which caused the very hills to re-echo, rushed forward. It needed but that war-cry to deprive the enemy of the last remnant of confidence. Without so much as waiting to ascertain from what species of force it proceeded, the appalling cheer no sooner met their ears, than they broke and fled from the field, in a state of confusion quite as irremediable as that into which the other portions of their line had fallen.

Thus ended the battle of Maida; an affair of small numbers, doubtless, but second in point of brilliancy of execution, and excellence of effect, to none in which a British army has ever been engaged. Though the political results which immediately arose out of it were not great, one admirable purpose it undeniably served,—it established, beyond the possibility of doubt, a truth, of which, in spite of the glorious campaign in Egypt, Europe still doubted. It taught foreign nations that on shore, no less than on the sea—in the field no less than on the quarter-deck—Britons know how to fight, and how to conquer,—even though the enemy surpass them in numbers, as much as he may be supposed to surpass them in skill and experience.

It is not necessary for me to describe to you at length the amount of loss experienced on each side. Enough is done when I state, that whilst ours fell short in killed and wounded of three hundred men, that of the enemy was computed to exceed three thousand, of which thirteen hundred were *killed upon the* spot, and eleven hundred wounded *and made prisoners.* All this, however, took place durin-

the action, for the pursuit was neither very lengthened nor very destructive; indeed, the total absence of cavalry, as well as the exhausted condition of the infantry, rendered pursuit the next thing to impossible. But we were not therefore without means of cutting off stragglers, and destroying small parties. The Calabrese, encouraged by our success, rose upon the vanquished, harassing their detachments, and cutting off the fugitives; till the number of prisoners brought in by these allies, amounted to several hundreds. But on such subjects I am not competent to speak, more especially as of the progress of the expedition I saw no more.

CHAPTER VI.

I HAVE said that the French fled with great precipitation, and that our people were so completely overcome by the toil of a severe battle, fought after a night almost of watching under an Italian July sun, that little or no attempt was made to harass them. A few light companies only, with a detachment of Highlanders, followed; but even these failed of producing any important result, rather through the disadvantages under which pursuers always labour, than from the absence of zeal or even speed. The French, as troops defeated generally do, divested themselves of all encumbrances, leaving knapsacks, accoutrements, and even firelocks behind; our men could follow only as soldiers, ready for immediate action. As a matter of course, we were left rapidly behind; though not till several persons on both sides had been wounded by the fire of the covering and pursuing parties. Of that number I was one. Almost the last shot discharged took effect in my left arm; and I was compelled by pain and loss of blood to abandon my company.

I need not pretend to explain to my present auditors how a man feels, either when he is first hit by a ball, or after *he is* conveyed back to a hospital. A sharp stunning *blow, as* if it had been given with a heavy club, caused

:, and fairly whirled me round like a feather.
)nd or two I so far lost my recollection as to be
)f guessing at the cause; but a single application
ıd joint to the hurt, set me right in that particular.
was fractured; and my useless limb hung like an
ce at my side. Yet I did not fall. On the con-
asped the wounded joint tightly; partly with a
p the hemorrhage, partly to support it; and then
:k to the camp with all the speed of which I was

irst glance at the nature of my hurt, the surgeon,
y horror, pronounced that amputation was neces-
:lieve that I would have resisted this, had either
strength or mental vigour been adequate to re-
ut excruciating pain, accompanied by a parching
ived me of the power of articulation, and I sub-
hout a murmur, to the operation. I retain no
)llection of what I felt at the moment; I remember
ıe limb was taken off upon the field, and that as
stump had been dressed, I was removed into a
)r the purpose of being conveyed back to the

ıall I forget the torture which the movement of
)us vehicle occasioned; or the shrieks and groans
)anions in misery, who, four in number, occupied
:h me. Neither the infliction of the wound, nor
t horrid incision of the amputator's knife, was to
ed with the excruciating pain which followed
for the roads were rough and uneven, the car
t springs, and the driver little attentive to the
his cargo. In this manner we were transported
f the fords of the river, the wheels slipping from
ne, and the horse floundering through the gravel.
s improved as soon as we gained the smooth
over these level sands we rolled on in compara-
ıd reached the shipping, exhausted but not ago-
ıs the sun was setting.

y all the details of our voyage to Sicily, and of
treatment which not I only, but the rest of the
ceived after our arrival there. At first, even

the officers were placed in hospitals, that they might be more immediately under the eye of the medical staff; of whose exertions to alleviate their sufferings and recruit their strength, no man who has ever experienced them can be forgetful. As we became convalescent, however, we were permitted to return to our old quarters,—a licence of which no man more gladly availed himself than I; and I was once more a denizen of my original billet, when my comrades, after a glorious though not very profitable campaign, rejoined me. That was, as you may well believe, a meeting fraught with no common joy to all parties, more especially as only three members of the mess were wanting; and the fate of one of these excited at least as much of wonder as regret, because to all except myself it appeared involved in mystery. You have doubtless anticipated the name of the absentee thus alluded to.

When the returns were first given in, it was of course concluded that Captain Vernon was among the number of killed. The strictest search was in consequence made for his body; but though not the field of battle only, but all the thickets and covers near were carefully examined, not a trace of him could be discovered. The next opinion hazarded naturally was, that he had fallen into the hands of the enemy; but besides that our regiment was never so circumstanced as to run the risk of losing any of its members by capture, a flag of truce—sent in to the head-quarters of General Regnier, for the purpose of ascertaining who had, and who had not been taken—returned with a report that no such individual was a prisoner. Every one now became totally at a loss to account for his disappearance. I alone guessed at the true cause, though even I could have spoken, had I been so disposed, from conjecture only. As to the rest, they seemed willing to credit any rumour, no matter how extravagant or absurd, rather than give credence for a moment to a suspicion of the truth. It is scarcely necessary to add, that I dropped no hint on the subject. Grieved, mortified, perhaps indignant as was, I would not have so far injured him for worlds; and hence I took care, as often as the topic chanced to be introduced, to join my own to the general cry of amazement and apprehension.

Things had been in this state about a month, and I was
ar recovered from my hurt as to appear occasionally
ness, when an event befel as remarkable of its kind as
r in which I have ever been an actor. I was sitting
night in my chamber, ruminating over past occurrences,
l indulging in such speculations respecting the future as
ıths of my age are in the habit of encouraging, when a
ock at my door, so gently given as to be scarcely dis-
guishable from the nibbling of a mouse, attracted my at-
tion. I listened in silence, doubtful whether imagination
l not deceived me, and was preparing, after a consider-
e pause, to resume my interrupted meditations, when
same cautious knock was repeated. Satisfied now that
ne one stood without, I walked to the door, and opening
beheld a figure closely muffled in a cloak, standing upon
threshold. Instinctively I retreated, my eye fixed upon
intruder, at the same time that I stretched forth my
ıd for my sword; but the figure, be it what it might,
not follow. It made one pace, and only one, in advance,
l then gazed around, as if anxious to discover whether I
s alone. The latter movement by no means reconciled
to my companion.

"Who are you?" exclaimed I. "And what is your
siness? Speak! or I will alarm the sentry at the bottom
the yard, and cause you to be arrested."

"'Is there any one here besides yourself?' asked the
anger in a disguised voice.

"What is that to you?" cried I. "Explain who and
ıat you are on the instant, or take the consequences."

I moved towards the window as I spoke, when the figure
ldenly sprang forward, and casting aside the mantle which
d hitherto enshrouded him, displayed the face and form
Vernon. I knew him instantly: but how changed was
since last we sat together in this very apartment, con-
rsing freely and lovingly like brethren and friends! Pale,
ggard, wasted to a shadow, with eyes sunk in their
kets, and cheekbones sharp and protruding, the miserable
ın stood before me the very living emblem of ruined hopes
d *mental distraction*.

"*You may well* stare at me thus,' cried he. 'You

well doubt the evidence of your own senses! yet they do not deceive you, Section. Once more stands in your presence the most humiliated, the most self-despised and wretched of men. Ay, turn away from me," continued he, as I involuntarily averted my face from his wild yet sorrowful gaze. "It is right that you, and every honourable man, should turn away in disgust and loathing from a coward. I know that there is pollution in the very air I breathe, which affects, and must affect all except my miserable self. But you shall not long be blasted by my presence. I come only to see you, that I might heap reproaches on you, and then follow wherever an adverse fate may lead. Section, have you behaved towards me as your professed regard entitled me to expect? Did you not pledge yourself that I should not again turn my back upon the enemy, or if I did, that I should fall? Why is it that I am here? Why do not these accursed limbs sleep beside the brave on the field of Maida?"

"Vernon," said I, after a brief but violent struggle to recover my composure, "you have no right to tax me with behaving towards you otherwise than as the most rigid friendship could require. I ceased not, from the commencement of the advance, to urge upon you the necessity of exertion:—if your courage failed in the moment of trial, how am I to blame?"

"'In every way!' exclaimed he fiercely. "'Were you not solemnly pledged, in case other measures failed, to shoot me through the head?'"

"No," replied I, "never! I never made any such promise. And if I had, I should have certainly not kept it. Do you look upon me as capable of committing a cold-blooded and deliberate murder?"

"'Murder!' shrieked the unhappy man. "'Call you that murder! It would have been an act of mercy,—of mercy the purest and most disinterested. You would have rid the world at once of a wretch, the print of whose foot insults the very earth, at the same time that you would have delivered me from a load which I cannot otherwise shake off, though *I abhor it.* Oh, Section—Section! how can I ever forgive *you this* irreparable injury?"

"My poor unhappy friend," said I, melted almost to tears, "why is it that you permit a disordered imagination thus to hurry you into extravagance? Consider for a moment what I must have felt, had I rashly done as you required, and as you would have me believe that I promised. But enough of this: tell me whence you have come, what you propose to do, and whither it is you design to proceed."

"I have come," replied he, "from the purlieus of this city, where I have skulked since the return of the wounded from the battle. How I contrived to get on board unnoticed I cannot tell; but for three entire days I lay in the hold of a transport, without tasting a morsel of bread, or moistening my lips with a drop of water. By this means I was conveyed across the Straits, and I have lived with the poorest and meanest of the people, in the disguise of a deserter from the navy ever since. As to my intentions for the future, what ought they to be? With a name eternally disgraced, and a fortune eternally ruined, what boots it where I go, or how I act? All that I ask is to die,—and to die in any manner except by my own hand, for which I have not courage."

"Then let me convey to you as much of consolation," said I, "as your unfortunate circumstances will allow. Your name is not disgraced—your fortunes are not ruined. Not a human being, except myself, is aware of the means by which you quitted the field; and even I know these by your own confession, and by it only. A thousand surmises have been formed respecting you; but, as I hope to be saved, no one, as far as I know, has breathed a suspicion to your discredit."

Vernon gazed at me with an expression so bright, so variable, yet so suspicious, as to affect me in a degree not easily described.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed he, at last. "Can I credit my own senses—or are you, whom I have so intimately trusted, capable of deceiving me?"

"I do not deceive you," replied I, "as you may discover for yourself, provided you can muster resolution to appear to-morrow on the parade-ground. All that is *required of you is to* get up some plausible account of your

disappearance, and I will answer for your receiving a kind reception from the officers of the regiment."

Vernon's colour went and came rapidly for some moments, during which time he eyed me with a look of peculiar scrutiny from head to foot.

"And how has my name been treated in the returns?" asked he.

"It appeared among the list of missing," answered I.

There was again a silence for a little space; at the conclusion of which, Vernon, having, as it seemed, made up his mind, said,

"No, Section, I cannot, and will not return to the ranks again. The important trial has been made, and it has failed;—it were madness, worse than madness, to repeat it. Yet would I fain retire from the service with a character not wholly destroyed; and would you but promise to keep my secret, so much may be effected. To meet my brother officers face to face, however, and impose upon them a tale which I know to be false, is a task to which I am not competent. But I can write to them after my return to England, whither I shall immediately proceed; and if you continue faithful, as you have hitherto been, I may yet, in some other walk of life, become a respectable member of society. You are not rich, I know. Now, to me money is no object: grant me one favour, by permitting me to lodge in our agent's hands the price of your company."

To all that Vernon had hitherto said, I listened with patience. I really felt for him as an object deserving pity rather than censure; and there was nothing, inconsistent with my own honour, that I was not prepared to undertake with a view to forward his wishes; but this last proposal hurt me deeply. It was neither more nor less than an effort on his part to bind me to his cause by ties of pecuniary obligation. My blood boiled as I thought of this.

"Captain Vernon," said I, "you are perfectly correct in supposing that I am a poor man; but you are deceived in me if you take me for a mean one. The king himself could not bribe me to adopt any line of conduct of which my own *conscience* did not approve; I neither want, nor will accept of, bribes from such as you."

"Forgive me, Section," exclaimed he, coming forward and holding out his hand, which, in the height of my indignation, I refused to accept, "and do more justice both to yourself and me than suppose that I ever harboured the idea of bribing you to any thing. It is not so, Heaven is my witness. When I spoke of purchasing a company for you, I alluded only to an act which I have often meditated, but of which no opportunity of speaking has occurred till now. But let that pass. Since you will not accept a favour at my hands, I cannot force it upon you; yet I am despicable enough to implore one at yours. Will you solemnly promise to keep my secret?"

"Most readily," answered I; "I solemnly promise never to betray you whilst I continue a member of this regiment, nor to mention your story in any place where there can be the smallest risk of your being injured by it."

"A thousand and a thousand thanks," said he, in a tone almost of renewed cheerfulness. "Then even yet I may hold up my head, and my family, at least, will escape the disgrace which I have laboured to bring upon them. And now, farewell, Section! I can scarcely venture to hope that you will continue to think well of one of whose cowardice you have received proofs so convincing; but when you do think of me, think at least as much in pity as in anger."

Again he held out his hand, which this time I did not refuse; and then turning briskly round, he hurried into the street.

Of the particulars of Vernon's future history I can give you no account. About two months after our strange meeting, a letter arrived from him, which bore date somewhere in the West of England, and contained a long, and not a badly connected history of his capture by a band of stragglers, and his sufferings from severe wounds. In it he spoke of himself as disabled for future service, his constitution having entirely given way under the privations to which he was subject; and he announced his intention of selling out as soon as the sanction of the proper authorities could be obtained to the measure. We received no further communication *from him*; but the very next file of gazettes *informed us that Lieutenant* Such-a-one was to be ca[illegible]

by purchase, in the — regiment of Foot, *vice* Percy Vernon, who had retired.

Captain Section's narrative was followed, as those of his predecessors had been, with the thanks and good wishes of the party, in which, as the reader may suppose, I was not backward in joining; but my astonishment may be conceived, when the President, after casting a glance of peculiar meaning round the table, thus began:

"It appears to me, gentlemen, that after so many details on our parts, we have some claim upon our worthy guest, who has, according to his own admission, seen service, and cannot, therefore, be without a few reminiscences connected with it. With your permission, therefore, I invite him (for here my authority extends not) to take his turn; and I promise him, in the event of his compliance, to wind up with one more chronicle of former times."

It was to no purpose that I protested against being thus taken by surprise, and declared my absolute inability to recollect, far less to repeat, any tale worthy of attention. There was a universal outcry—"Proceed, proceed; we are not fastidious, as you may easily see." For a short time, I struggled against it; but, finding that further opposition would offend, I bethought me of the following adventure among the Pyrenees, and detailed it.

A PYRENEAN ADVENTURE.

A PYRENEAN ADVENTURE.

CHAPTER I.

At the period when the left column of the British army ccupied the pass of Irun, the particular regiment of which was a member, pitched its tents on a sort of platform, or tural terrace, in the side of the Quatracone mountain. ıe situation of the camp was one of extreme beauty. ıeltered from the rays of the sun by a grove of graceful arf-oaks, our background was formed by the bald rocks d giant shapes of the mountain, which, tier above tier, d precipice above precipice, rose in barren majesty into e clouds. On either side of our platform was a ravine: at upon the right, abrupt and of considerable depth, was rkened both to its base, and to the brow of the opposite ll, by the foliage of a dense forest; that upon the left, ore gradual in its declivity, afforded room for a few corn-lds and other cultivated spots, as it sloped away into the vel country. In front, again, were the mouth of the pass, ıe high-road, the Bidassoa, Fontarabia, and the ocean, all them so hemmed in by the heights of Audaye and San arcial, as to compose one of the most splendid vistas hich it has ever been my good fortune to behold.

Whilst the corps was stationed here, and indeed as often s circumstances would allow, it was my custom to wander way from the camp, with a gun over my shoulder, and a og at my heels, for the double purpose of picking up a *ttle provend for the* mess, and indulging a spirit of roving *d adventure which* was then natural to me.

One fine day towards the end of September, in the year 1813, my faithful Juno and her master set out, in high health and spirits, to pursue their wonted occupation.

I have said that on the right of the terrace occupied by our tents was a wooded ravine of considerable depth and steepness. At the bottom of that hollow ran a beautiful rivulet, which, after falling from a sort of detached shoulder of the Quatracone, wound onwards through the valley, till it joined the Bidassoa near the ruined bridge. I had often experienced a desire to trace that stream to its source, partly because I felt satisfied that the labour of the journey would be more than compensated by the magnificence of the scenery to which it must lead, and partly because I longed to shoot one or more of the many eagles, which, from their nests among the cliffs, looked down upon us, as if in anxious expectation of the moment when the fortune of battle should consign us to their talons. This morning I resolved, at all hazards, to gratify that inclination; so, striking off by the rear of the camp, I made at once for the waterfall.

I may not so much as attempt a description of the various and magnificent spectacles, which the progress of that toilsome, and occasionally hazardous excursion, from time to time spread out before me. As long as my route conducted up the face of the cliff, from a basin on the summit of which the rivulet tumbled, I could, as often as I chose to turn round, look down upon towns and villages, cornfields and meadows, tents and ships, redoubts and cottages; but from the instant that the ridge was passed, every vestige of human skill and human exertion was shut out. A long, narrow, winding vale lay beneath me; gloomy with forests, apparently trackless, and of the growth of ages; and girdled in by rocks and precipices hurled into every variety of fantastic shape. On either hand, and far off in my front, hill rose above hill, and cone above cone, as if a thousand earthquakes had been at work, or the globe had never, in this corner at least, escaped from a state of chaos. *But words* are wanting to describe such a panorama. It is *sufficient* to observe that, accustomed as I had been, from *childhood*, to highland scenery, this perfectly astonished

me, insomuch that I remained for several minutes riveted to the spot, from which it first burst upon me. Nor was I more struck by the objects which affected my sense of sight, than by the sort of preternatural stillness which prevailed. Either the breezes blew not at all, or the trees and shrubs in the valley were entirely sheltered from them; for not a bough or a leaf was in motion. The only sounds, indeed, which reached me were a sort of indistinct murmur, produced by the waterfall, now many hundred feet below me, and the occasional shrill cry of an eagle, as it sailed over head, at a height which placed it far beyond the reach of danger from any power except that of the storm.

Having indulged, for some time, the feelings which such a scene was calculated to excite, as well as recovered my breath and rested my limbs, I began to look around for the purpose of ascertaining how I might most easily attain the object of my present ambition, by reaching the top of the mountain. You will understand, that I was now seated upon a sort of sugar-loaf hill, connected on both sides with other hills three or four times more lofty than itself. That upon the right seemed peculiarly rough and uneven; that upon the left, besides that the stream trickled down its surface, was more grassy and accessible; so I resolved to scale it. But I found, on putting my determination into force, that even it was far from being devoid of difficulties. Projections, which, when viewed from a distance, appeared trifling and easy of ascent, proved, when attained to, wholly impervious; whilst the grass itself was in many spots so dry and slippery, as to render it exceedingly hazardous to pass along. Nevertheless, I had proceeded too far to return now. I pushed on, winding round the base of such rocks as I found myself unable to scale, and creeping on all fours, when to walk upright became impossible; and I was rewarded, after two hours and a half of severe labour, by beholding what I took to be the last of the ridges. It was a large perpendicular cone; but there seemed to be a pass, or, *as an Highlander* would call it, a Balloch, on one side of it; *and to that I* directed my steps.

I was approaching rapidly to this object of my wishes, when the cry of an eagle, coming, as it appeared to me, from the opposite side of the brow, attracted my attention. In a whisper, I ordered Juno to heel; and putting a ball in one barrel, instead of small shot, I lay down on my belly, and in that position dragged myself towards the summit. I gained it with some difficulty; but you may imagine what my feelings were, when, on peeping over the ridge, I beheld in a sort of narrow glen or hollow, the diameter of which could not exceed twenty or thirty yards, the bones and mutilated remains of not fewer than forty or fifty human beings. Upon these some dozen or two of eagles were sitting;—not in the act of gorging, for in truth nothing now remained upon which they or other carnivorous animals could feed; but scraping and turning the bones about, and with their beaks tearing, as if in mockery, into minute shreds, a few remnants of what had once been military clothing.

So little had I anticipated such a spectacle in these wild regions, that surprise, and, to a certain extent, horror, completely overcame me. I lay with my finger on the trigger, but abstained from firing, till my dog sprang upon the brow, and the alarmed birds, rising in an instant, escaped.

Less annoyed at having thus permitted my prey to elude me, than curious to ascertain how so many bodies could have come into a situation so singular, I looked about for some path or sloping declivity by which I might descend into this place of the dead; but I looked in vain. The skeletons lay in a hole, which I can compare to nothing more nearly than a disused coal-pit of extraordinary dimensions; that is to say, they occupied a spot closed in on three sides by perpendicular rocks. The fourth was, indeed, open, but as far as I could judge, by examining it from my present position, it was open only to a precipice. Having indulged in a few vague conjectures, therefore, and satisfied myself that I could do nothing more, I turned away, and, striking off to the right, soon entered the precincts of a thick wood. Here my dog beginning to quest, I had the satisfaction to find that I had at last arrived where game promised to be abundant. She led the way

n the side of the mountain—I followed; and my at-
ion being wholly engrossed, I went on, sometimes firing
a success, at other times missing, till the gradual dimi-
ion of light warned me that it was high time to think
returning to the camp.

f there be a sportsman here, and a keen one, he will
dily comprehend how a man, busied in the pursuit of
es, rabbits, and red-legged partridges, may become
olly unconscious both of the space of ground over which
passes, and the passage of time over his own head.
h, at least, was my case that day. For the last hour or
I had wandered on, through brake and briar, across
and valley, without taking any note of my bearings,
of the approach of evening; and now I found myself
erted by the sun at the bottom of a tangled glen, and
rounded on all sides by a pathless forest of cork-trees.

To confess the truth, I was very far from being delighted
h either my situation or prospects. It failed not to
ur to me that I had ventured within the legitimate ter-
ries of wolves and bears; and that, as darkness came
they were not unlikely to resent so bold an intrusion.
r aught I knew, the enemy's outposts might be close at
id; and, above all, there was the risk, in case I should
ture to seek my way back in the dark, of falling over
ne one of the numerous precipices, which lay, as I well
w, between me and the camp. The idea that my game-
was filled hardly sufficed to compensate for these gloomy
lections. But though I sincerely repented of my rash-
s, and wished myself a thousand times safe and sound
my tent, I by no means lost heart. On the contrary,
olving that no efforts should be wanting on my part, let
consequences be what they might, I gladly took advan-
e of the slight remains of twilight which still glimmered;
d turning my face, as well as I could guess, in the direc-
n of Irun, I strode forward.

But the progress which I had made in this random
rney was slight indeed, when a thousand obstacles, of
ich the rapidly-increasing darkness constituted not the
st, *compelled me* to pause. There was no longer light
icient to distinguish objects at three yards before me.

the underwood became more and more rough, and the ground more and more broken; till, at last, all hope of escape from the labyrinth left me. I now looked around for a convenient spot in which I might spend the night: not, indeed, free from apprehension that if I slept, it would be to awake in the clutch of some wild beast, but determined to keep awake as long as possible, and trust the rest to Providence. On my dog I knew that I could rely as a vigilant guardian; and I hoped, with the assistance of my double-barrelled gun, to repel any attack that might be made upon me.

I had arrived at this determination, and was preparing to act in accordance with it, when a couple of chance paces taken to the right brought me, to my no small delight, upon a beaten footpath. Thanking Heaven with all my heart, I at once determined to follow it, let it lead where it might; so I pushed on, though perfectly conscious that I was increasing my distance, at every step, from the tents of my regiment.

I had proceeded thus, as near as I could guess, about a mile and a half, when, the wood ending, I found myself at the corner of a bare green hill, and in the gorge of a valley. It was not, however, without a sense of serious apprehension that I discovered signs of the valley being occupied. A strong light issued from the doorless apertures and broken roof of a ruined cottage a few hundred yards off; and the sound of many voices, distinctly heard in the stillness of evening, gave proof that the ruin in question was filled with people. Who were they?—that was the question which demanded an answer. If Frenchmen, as was by no means improbable, death or captivity would reward my further progress. If Spaniards!—I did not relish that idea much more keenly than the other; for I well knew that Spanish guerillas were seldom very scrupulous when plunder fell in their way. Nevertheless, I resolved to advance at all risks. I did so, my dog keeping close to my heel, and moving, like her master, in profound silence, till the challenge of a sentinel, whom I had not observed, *arrested* my steps.

"*Now*, then," thought I, "it only remains for me to

sell my life at as dear a rate as possible." I cocked my gun, and stood still. The man challenged again, and I recognised the full broad dialect of a Biscayan. I answered without further delay; upon which the man, commanding me to halt, shouted aloud, and in a moment the picket was under arms. It was soon discovered that I was alone; I was permitted to advance, and, having satisfied my captors that I was an English officer, they conducted me, with much civility, into the house. The officer, however, being absent to arrange his sentries, they could neither furnish me with a guide, nor permit me to depart alone; but they offered me a snug place beside their fire, made no attempt to deprive me of my weapon, and kindly supplied me with what was probably the sole refreshment which they had to offer—a cigar. I was not displeased with this treatment, but sat contentedly enough among them till their commander arrived.

This person, on whose entrance they all rose, was a young man of very peculiar and striking appearance. His hair and mustaches, like those of Spaniards in general, were coal-black, and his complexion was of that deep olive hue which the faces of men much exposed to the sun and winds of a southern climate usually obtain. But there was a brightness and penetration in his eye which pierced through the individual on whom it rested; and a strong expression of daring—I might almost call it ferocity—overspread his whole countenance. In stature he did not greatly exceed the middle size, if indeed he exceeded it all; but his well-knit limbs, full chest, and broad shoulders indicated a surpassing degree of bodily strength and activity. His dress, too, was abundantly picturesque. A brown cloak, buckled round the neck, fell so far over one shoulder as to expose a rich green uniform beneath it, whilst appended to an embroidered belt, in which, by the way, were stuck a brace of steel-mounted pistols, hung a sabre of unusual size and weight. On his head he wore a richly-laced foraging-cap; a pair of tan-leather boots encased his legs; and to complete his resemblance rather to a robber-chief than a soldier, he carried a short rifle over his right shoulder. I have seldom seen a better subject for a painter

than the whole group presented by the light of a large fire of wood.

The Spanish officer stopped short the instant he beheld me, and fixing a keen and half-suspicious glance upon me, demanded my quality and business. I informed him on both heads at once, explaining that I had been overtaken by darkness when shooting in the woods hard by, and considered myself fortunate in having arrived at a place from whence a guide might be procured, or, at least, shelter obtained for the night.

"May I believe this fine tale?" said he, in a tone of voice which I was far from relishing. "Here you are, within half-musket-shot of the enemy's lines, professing to have lost your way in an attempt to reach Irun."

I could only reply by repeating my assertion, and by reminding him, that I was quite ignorant of the very points of the compass amid these mountains.

The Spaniard was silent for a moment, and then said, "You are an Englishman, I perceive; and the English are in general honest, as well as brave; but there may be traitors even among them. Perhaps, you are one; perhaps, you designed to desert to the enemy."

Indignant beyond measure at this allegation, I would have picked a quarrel with him on the spot, had not a single glance round the room sufficed to convince me, that such a measure could only end in my own destruction. I repelled it, however, in such a way, as to show him, that he had seriously wounded my feelings; nor was my hint lost upon him. His suspicions appeared to subside, and motioning to me to resume my seat, he put several other questions to me, in more friendly language. At length, he became satisfied, and desired to know my wishes. I replied, that I required only a guide as far as the camp above Irun, and that I would cheerfully compensate the person who undertook the office. He then said something, not very courteously, it is true, about abiding where I was till morning; but on my declining the invitation, he did not press it. A *non-commissioned* officer, whom he named Manillo, was *accordingly* commanded to see me safe; and without *having* either given or received a salute from this discour-

teous warrior, I withdrew. Before going, however, I pulled out a hare and a couple of rabbits from my bag, and gave them to the soldiers,—a present for which these poor fellows appeared exceedingly thankful.

CHAPTER II.

My guide and I continued our journey for some time in silence; till at last, my mind being full of the remarkable appearance, and no less remarkable behaviour, of the Spanish officer, I asked him whether or not he knew any thing of his history?

"Yes, sir," replied the man; "I know it all,—as well I may; for we were both born in this very valley, and have been friends from our cradles."

"In this valley!" replied I; "did you say in this valley —and that you have been friends from infancy?"

"Even so," answered Manillo, "and might have gone further; I might have added that we were brothers, for Francisco was to have married my sister. Was to have married?—He did marry her, though the hell-hounds tore the marriage-tie asunder."

My curiosity was now excited to the highest pitch, and I entreated my companion to gratify it. He complied, though not without the endurance of considerable pain; and the following is the story which he told me:

"You see these ruined cottages below us," said he: "they are all that remains of the homes of our fathers."

I looked where the soldier pointed; and with the help of the stars which now shone out, beheld eight or ten huts in the hollow beneath. "And now look up," continued my conductor, just as we reached the bottom of a deep cut, or rather an old water-course, in the side of the hill—"Do you observe that high rock, not far from the summit of the mountain."

I gazed upwards, and saw distinctly enough a bold bare *cliff, projecting* from amid a thick forest of underwood.

A strange idea crossed my mind at this moment, and I hastily asked whether there was not a deep hollow beyond the precipice? He assented. "And it is full of human bones," continued I. "Aha!" exclaimed the Spaniard, "have you seen them? Then," added he, violently raising his clenched fist in the air, "you have looked upon the bones of those who butchered our fathers and our children, and violated and murdered our wives and sisters. But you shall hear all.

"Three years have hardly elapsed since the cottages which I lately pointed out to you were inhabited by eight as poor, but as contented families as are to be found in Spain. We had no laws, yet there was not a dishonest person amongst us; and, instead of a magistrate, we looked up to and obeyed Senor Albarcho, because he was the oldest and wisest member of the community. Senor Albarcho, you must know, was the father of our present Captain Francisco, and a better man never walked the earth. We had our priest likewise, one of ourselves, whom we all reverenced and respected. Our business was to tend a few goats, which we all had in common; to cultivate a few fields, the fruits of which we shared in common; to hunt bears and chamois, and to make one another comfortable. We were completely shut out from the rest of the world; but that we never regretted; for our priest told us, and we believed him, that there was no real good in the world of which we were not already possessed.

"You will easily believe, that persons thus situated felt rather like the members of one family, than the inhabitants of the same village; indeed, we composed, properly speaking, but one family: that is, we all married among ourselves, and so became connected by ties of blood, as well as of friendship. Well, sir, an attachment had long subsisted between Francisco and my sister Amante, and the 8th of June, 1810, was fixed for the wedding-day. We were not ignorant that at this time the country swarmed with foreign troops; we had even hesitated, more than once, whether we were not bound, as true Spaniards, to take up *arms for* their expulsion; but our father, as we called Senor *Albarcho,* protested strongly against it, and we could not

go in opposition to his will. We accordingly remained at peace; and as no soldiers came near us, we gradually ceased to believe that King Ferdinand was really driven from his throne.

"I told you that the 8th of June was fixed as the wedding-day of Francisco and Amante. We all accompanied them to church, heard them receive the priest's benison, and followed them home; where the remainder of the morning, and some portion of the afternoon, were devoted to sports and merriment. Oh, what an interruption to that mirth took place! We had spread out our supper under the chestnut-tree before the bridegroom's door, and were making ready to partake of it, when the sudden appearance of armed men at the bottom of the valley threw us into the greatest alarm. The women fled into the house; the old men stood irresolute, and the young ran for their rifles. But the hand of God was upon us. These were Frenchmen, sir,—bloody, barbarous Frenchmen, who had discovered our peaceful retreat, and came to destroy it for ever. I cannot go on,—imagine what followed, if you can. The miscreants sprang upon our women and our goods; we were too feeble, and too few, successfully to oppose them; and we heard in our retreat shrieks to which we could not reply, and wailings which we could not sooth."

The Spaniard became here so violently agitated, that his very voice failed him; but recovering his self-command in a few minutes, he proceeded:—

"Nothing now remained for us but vengeance. We betook ourselves, eighteen in number, to the neighbouring fastnesses, and choosing Francisco for our leader, we became Guerillas. But we went not beyond the precincts of our own valley. No; our cry, day and night, was for vengeance, and to obtain it, we hovered round the ruins of our houses like beasts of prey. Not a Frenchman strayed from his cantonments who returned alive; and many and many a time have we roused the whole band from their unholy slumbers with our war-shout. Exasperated at this behaviour, the miscreants completed the bloody work which they had begun. Every male, and every aged female, who fell into their hands, perished on the first day; now

they butchered, and threw out to us, our wives and little ones. But there was mercy in this; for how could we again receive those whom the dogs had defiled?

"You have seen the hollow on the top of that rock. It is called the Fuente; for tradition says, that it was once a small lake, and that the ravine, across which we passed, was the channel of the river that flowed from it. I know not whether there be truth in this, but its situation is one of the most remarkable in all these districts. You observed how it is enclosed on three sides; on the fourth, there is a fall of many feet; and the rocks stretching out on either hand beyond the fall, render it perfectly inaccessible. At one corner, however, it is separated from the mountain by a chasm of little more than eighteen feet in width: we laid a narrow bridge of plank over the chasm, and made the old lake our fortress. From this point we were in the daily habit of sallying out upon the enemy; and at last we made it the scene of a glorious revenge.

"At the suggestion of our leader, we determined, if it were possible, to lure the monsters into our den, and to destroy them there. For this purpose, we laboured hard at a huge rock, which hung immediately over our bridge, till we had so loosened it, as that a push from the arm of a child would roll it down the gulf. That being effected, we proceeded to carry the rest of our scheme into execution, thus:—one morning, as usual, we rushed down upon the valley, and having maintained a skirmish rather longer and more animated than usual, the bloodhounds were so enraged as to pursue us up the hill. As soon as we reached the forest, all except Francisco, who was the object of their bitterest hatred, avoided the old channel, and escaped into the woods. Francisco, affecting to be wounded, made for the bridge. He crossed, and forty-five of the miscreants, including their commander, followed. This was all that we desired. Instantly the crag fell, and striking the planks exactly in the middle, it dashed them down into the abyss, cutting off all hope of escape from those within the *Fuente*.

"In the mean while we had taken our stations on the ridges, and looked down in savage exultation upon our

prey. For Francisco we feared nothing, because we knew his intention; and we shouted aloud in order to give him an opportunity of carrying it into effect. We were successful. Whilst the Frenchmen, paralyzed with horror, were gazing upwards upon the death which hung over them, Francisco, uttering a loud cry, ran towards the chasm, and with one desperate bound, cleared it. Oh, sir, had you seen the expression of the murderers' countenances then; had you beheld their uplifted hands, and heard their scream for mercy, your blood would have boiled within you, as mine boils now! Our captain answered them. "Mercy!" cried he, "ay, such mercy as ye granted. Look down, fiends, upon the village ye have destroyed! behold the bodies of the aged and the feeble whom ye have butchered! listen to the cry of those whom ye have violated!—and now take your reward." This was the signal, and we opened our fire upon them. It was in vain that they ran from side to side, seeking for a place of shelter or escape, or reached the brink of the chasm in hopeless despair. Three wretches only tried the leap, and they were dashed to pieces. The rest died, one after another, as our bullets took effect; and we left them where they fell, that their bones might bleach in the rains of heaven, after their flesh should have been devoured by the eagles."

The Spaniard here ended his story, and to my astonishment I found that we were already in the camp. I offered him money, but he refused it: indeed he seemed like one beside himself with the recollection of the scenes which he had been describing. Having satisfied me that I was at home, he abruptly turned away, and I could hear the boughs and leaves crash before him, as with the speed of a racehorse he rushed down the glen.

My entertainers were a great deal too polite, not to lavish upon me more than a common share of the plaudits of which they were so liberal. These I of course received

at their full and legitimate value; but that which gratified me most of all, was the promptitude with which our excellent President redeemed the pledge which he had voluntarily given. Without pause, or preface, he entered at once upon the following history of THE RIVALS.

THE RIVALS.

THE RIVALS.

CHAPTER I.

It was on a fine April morning in the year 1776, that the 71st regiment, otherwise called Fraser's Highlanders, in which I bore a commission, began to assemble in heavy marching order in the Tron-gate of Glasgow. Though imbodied little more than a month, and as a necessary consequence, at once incomplete in its equipments and totally undrilled, such was the urgency of affairs in the Colonies, and so great the difficulty found in raising men, that the corps had been already for a full fortnight under orders for embarkation; and on the morning to which I allude, it held its muster, for the purpose of proceeding to Greenock, where transports lay ready to receive it. You are, doubtless, aware that at this period of our history, Highland regiments were enrolled, not by the modern system of recruiting for general service, but at the call of particular persons whose influence in particular districts was great. The same system which brought together the Black Watch and other distinguished Scottish corps, prevailed in the instance of which I am now speaking. Fraser of Lovat, the chief of the clan Fraser, received from His Majesty's government a commission to imbody a regiment; he applied for, and obtained the assistance of several other gentlemen, intimate friends of his own, and hereditary allies of his house; and he addressed himself to the task, not only *with alacrity*, but with perfect confidence of success. *Lovat was not* deceived in his estimation, either of his

own personal weight, or of the feelings of his clan. Though the warrant to enlist men did not reach him till late in February, an immediate communication was opened between him and his friends; and before the middle of April two thousand three hundred and forty Highlanders answered to his call, and were regularly enrolled under his standard.

Than the regiment thus raised, as it were, at a moment's warning, it would not be easy to point out a finer body of men. Undisciplined they doubtless were; but if youth, strength, activity, hardihood, courage the most daring, and patience the most exhaustless, are the requisites for making soldiers, Fraser's Highlanders possessed them all in an eminent degree. Nor were these the only particulars in which that fine body of men excelled. The recruits being drawn principally from the lands of four or five individuals, they were almost all familiarly known to one another; and they entertained for one another a strong personal regard, which is never without its use in active warfare. Moreover, care was taken to place them under the command of officers, either natives of the same districts with themselves, or known as intimates of their chiefs. It is not necessary to add, that throughout the ranks of a regiment thus held together, over which military law exerted hardly any influence, its place being far more efficaciously supplied by personal feeling, the noblest spirit prevailed. The honour or dishonour of the corps was felt to implicate the honour or dishonour of every man and officer attached to it; nor was there any thing which these brave men would not have attempted, few things that they would not have accomplished, to advance the one, and guard against the other.

Among the numerous instances of personal attachment which a corps thus constituted may be supposed to exhibit, there was none more remarkable, nor productive of effects more striking, than that of which I am now going to make mention. In the company to which I was attached, there were two young men, each bearing the name of Allen Macdonald, though in no respect, as far as I am aware, related to one another. These youths, whom, according to Highland fashion, it was customary to distinguish by a surname taken from the peculiarities of their personal

appearance, were both of them natives of the romantic district of Glencoe; the shielings in which they first saw the light stood but a short bow-shot apart; and the lads being of the same age, and addicted to the same pursuits, had been playfellows and companions from their childhood. We may talk of the love which brother bears for brother, in terms as exaggerated as we choose to employ; we may persuade ourselves, if we will, that there cannot be a tie more tender, than that which binds a parent to his child, or a child to his parent; but sure I am that neither brother, parent, nor child, ever felt for the object of its obligatory regard, the absolute devotion of heart and soul and principle, which these friends experienced the one for the other. Allen Dhu knew not what it was to conceal a thought, or a wish, or a feeling, from Allen Roy; Allen Roy had no interests apart or distinct from those of Allen Dhu:—in a word, if ever friendship the firmest and most disinterested subsisted between men, it did so between these two children of the Black Mount.

Having informed you of the mode by which the old 71st was officered, it is scarcely necessary to add, that the utmost care was taken to interfere as little as might be with the partialities and prepossessions of the men. As a matter of course, Allen Dhu and Allen Roy were comrades; for which, indeed, nature had in some degree fashioned them; the former being just so much taller than the latter, as that the one stood in the front rank, whilst the other covered him: and they occupied, after their arrival in Glasgow, the same chamber in the house where a portion of the corps was billeted. There they remained, esteemed by their fellow soldiers, and respected by the townspeople, during the interval that elapsed between the imbodying of the regiment, and its march to Greenock; and seldom has the value of human friendship been put to a severer test, than the events arising out of that sojourn applied.

It happened that there dwelt under the same roof with them a remarkably pretty and attractive girl, the eldest daughter of their host, by name Helen Shaw. With that maiden *both the* Highland recruits fell in love; and *both did their best,* as it was natural that they should,

to make an impression upon her heart. Whether it was that the one suspected the other of having the same object in view with himself, yet was unwilling to inquire into the grounds of his suspicion; or whether the natural shyness which in such cases keeps men silent, operated upon them in its customary way, I know not. One thing, however, is quite certain, that for the first time in their lives, the friends forbore from opening their minds to one another, and avoided, as if there had been a penalty attached to it, all mention of their designs respecting Helen. On the contrary, they affected to speak, not slightingly, for of a deceit so palpable both were incapable, but jocosely and carelessly of the maiden, as often as her name chanced to be introduced,—whilst each flattered himself that his real sentiments could be known only to Helen and himself.

I have said nothing as yet of the personal appearance of the rivals,—nor will many words be necessary to supply that defficiency. Allen Dhu was, as his name denotes, of a clear olive complexion. In person he was tall, well formed, light, active, but slender; and his features, if not critically beautiful, were such as few women would regard except with admiration. A profusion of black and glossy hair overshadowed a forehead white, high, and commanding, whilst his eyes, of the darkest hazel, seemed equally capable of flashing into anger and melting into love. Allen Roy, again, was remarkably fair; blue eyes, hair of a light auburn, with features whose chief attraction lay in their general expression, rather than in their regularity, pointed him out as a descendant rather of some Norwegian stock than as a genuine Celt: whilst his figure, less tall than that of his namesake, but far more muscular, seemed made for extraordinary exertions both of strength and activity. To say the truth, they were, after their particular fashions, two such fine-looking lads as rarely belong to their station in life. Their ages were the same, barely one-and-twenty and it is not to be wondered at if the object of their choice hesitated, or appeared to hesitate, for some time between them.

I do not know to what the circumstance is to be attributed—whether to his more steady devotion, or to a

ıter facility with which he contrived to make himself erstood—but at the end of some fortnight's or three ks' courtship, Helen Shaw declared in favour of Allen ı. Great was Allen's joy when first this confession was ng from her; and for many hours afterwards his feel- were too much engrossed by it to permit his giving a ıght to any thing besides. But he had not long enjoyed triumph ere the altered manner of his comrade showed that his own happiness was to be secured only at the ense of the happiness of his friend. I cannot tell whe- he really gave credit to Allen Roy's asseverations of olute indifference towards Helen. I am inclined, how-, to believe that he did not; though he might probably gine that the passion which was thus lightly spoken of d not be very violent, and the step which he took was btless designed not more in justice towards Helen, than ı a view of satisfying his comrade at once of the perfect elessness of his suit. Be this, however, as it may, he no ıer parted from Helen, than he hurried off to communi- to his friend the particulars of the interview which had taken place; and he did so with the abruptness and gy which characterize the language of mountaineers, n speaking under the influence of violent passion.

llen Roy heard him out without seeking to interrupt . Once or twice, indeed, his cheek flushed, and he ted his position, as men are accustomed to do when ıful and unlooked-for intelligence reaches them; but, pt by this, and an occasional grinding of the teeth, he ibited no signs of agitation, far less of hostility. But n Allen Dhu ceased, his struggle to appear calm could onger be concealed, and he spoke out with an energy ch set all control at defiance.

Allen," said he, "I have loved you from the cradle, as eagle loves her eyry on the top of Bochiel, or the deer pleasant pastures among the wilds of Glenorchie. Your ıes have been my wishes—your thoughts my thoughts; n I saw you happy, I was happy also; when you were rable, nothing could give me comfort. I did not think *day would ever* come when I should be compelled to say *ry you your* prosperity. But that black hour is upon

us now. You love, and are beloved in return—I love also, but there is no return of love for me. The maiden whose love has been the beacon of all my hopes, has given her heart, and will give her hand, to you; and I must live a solitary wretch, to curse the moment that ever I beheld her.'

Allen Dhu was powerfully overcome, as his friend thus addressed him.

"Brother of my adoption," cried he, "talk not thus. Read my heart, and learn how I dote upon Helen. The very air that I breathe is not so dear to me as she; but never shall it be said that Allen Dhu thought of his own happiness only, when that of his friend was at stake. Allen, I renounce her for ever. She is yours: go to her, plead your cause with her, and tell her that I sent you!"

"Never, never!" exclaimed the other. "Let this heart break: but never shall my brother make such a sacrifice as this. No, Allen; forgive me that I received your communication so unworthily, and bear with me a little longer, till the bitterness of grief pass away; but do not—do not insult my friendship by proposing terms which you would not hear me propose to you—which you know that I cannot accept. I will abandon your society for a time, till reason resume her sway again; and all that I entreat of you is, not to forget me whilst thus estranged from you."

The friends here embraced with an intensity of sorrow, such as few men, perhaps, but themselves could have experienced on such an occasion. In accordance with the determination expressed in the above speech, they applied, though not without a pang of extreme bitterness, to be parted; and Allen Roy by his own choice, was, in consequence removed into another company. For a little while the apparent coolness between them created a good deal of speculation in the regiment. Men wondered what ground of quarrel could have arisen between persons who had never been known to exchange so much as an angry word; and numerous and groundless were the conjectures hazarded, as to an occurrence so unlooked for. The marriage of Allen Dhu, however, which took place soon after, if it did not exactly serve as an explanation, at all events presented ground for certain shrewd suspicions which were very freely indulged in. The

friends had, without doubt been rivals. Living under the same roof, and enjoying the same means of access to the object of their common affection, it was to be expected that the one should feel deeply any little preference shown to the other; whilst such an issue to their rivalry as had actually occurred, could hardly fail of causing an open rupture.

Thus thought and thus reasoned the soldiers in general; and it is but just to allow that their conclusion was drawn from no extravagant premises. But ordinary men could not know, because they had never experienced, the kind of tie which held the friends together. Quarrel there was none; of coldness both were incapable: they still loved one another with an extravagance of attachment rarely to be found, and would have still laid down their lives, each to secure the welfare of the other. If they avoided all intercourse beyond that which necessity required, the measure was dictated by prudence and stern duty alone. But time and circumstances, which work changes in all things, operated with full vigour upon them; and the order to embark for foreign service, placed them once more upon their old footing of familiar intimacy.

CHAPTER II.

THE event which more immediately restored these young men to their original footing of intimacy was this: When the regiment came to be told off for active service, it was found that two compact battalions, of nine hundred bayonets each, would prove far more manageable, and, as a necessary consequence, more useful in the field, than a single corps of greater numerical strength, but unwieldy from its excess of numbers. To complete these, the ablest-bodied men were of course carefully selected; and both Allen Dhu and Allen Roy being of the number, they were paraded, as indeed they desired to be, with the service companies; *but they* were in different battalions. Having

already been separated at their own express desire, it was supposed by General Fraser and his officers, that such an arrangement would be acceptable to them; and it was adopted as a matter of personal favour, rather than as a measure dictated by general expediency. Never was a more mistaken idea entertained. So long as they retained the power of resuming their ancient habits whenever the cause which produced a temporary deviation from them should cease to operate, the friends were well enough pleased to continue an estrangement which they believed to be for the benefit of both; but now that their separation was about to become compulsory, perhaps eternal, their case assumed a widely different appearance.

It happened that the regiment was drawn up that morning in three separate bodies; the two service battalions being in parallel columns, whilst the depot, or reserve, occupied a position apart. Allen Dhu and Allen Roy, each stood on the flank of his company. They were so placed as to command a full view of one another; and it appeared as if that event alone were wanting to restore to full activity the feelings which had for some time back slumbered. For a moment or two after the word "attention" was given, the friends seemed to struggle against nature. They obeyed the voice of the commanding officer, and gazed steadily, as it were violently, to the front; but their efforts were fruitless. At the same instant, and as if they had acted by a preconcerted signal, they threw their muskets upon the ground; in defiance of every thing like military decorum and subordination, their ranks were abandoned, and Allen Dhu and Allen Roy, rushing into the space between the two columns, were immediately folded in each other's arms.

It was not surprising that every officer and man on the ground should be sensibly affected. Even the colonel, to whom the particulars of their case had been communicated, hardly strove to conceal his emotions; and so far from chiding the men for their proceeding, he spoke kindly and generously to them. I need scarcely detail the result. *Allen Dhu* and Allen Roy became from that moment re-

united in person as they had ever been in heart, and the latter assumed his old post, in his old company, as the comrade, or covering file of the former.

It is not necessary to offer any more detailed description of the circumstances which attended that memorable parade. Let it suffice to state, that they differed but little from those which usually attend the muster of regiments which assemble for similar purposes: with this exception only, that very few among our men being married, and all of them young, gallant, and careless, no such heart-rending scenes as sometimes occur, were brought before us. At that period, likewise, Government was less strict than it now is, in awarding an exact proportion of women to each battalion; and hence, almost every married soldier was permitted, I say not how wisely, to carry his wife along with him, even upon service. But had the case been otherwise, the most exact regulations would not have affected us, our whole number falling considerably short of six to each company; and the consequence was, that when the word was at last given to march, the column set forward, without one painful occurrence having cast a damp upon our spirits.

No event of the slightest moment occurred during the prosecution of our journey from Glasgow to Greenock. The distance being little more than twenty miles, was felt as nothing by a band of hardy mountaineers, accustomed, almost every day of their lives, to traverse twice that space, over ground infinitely more difficult; and the waggons and cars keeping well up with the rear, both the baggage and women came in almost as soon as the troops. Every thing, moreover, was conducted with a degree of order and regularity not universal in such cases. Of drunkenness, not a solitary instance took place; indeed, it is no more than justice to the Highland soldiery to avow, that a more temperate body of men exists not; and as care had been taken to provide an adequate supply of billets beforehand, all were speedily directed where to find lodgings. I do not believe that an hour elapsed after the halt of the column in the high street, before every man attached to it was in possession of his quarters for the night.

We found Greenock in a state of great bustle and con-

fusion, the town being crowded with soldiers and seamen, and the harbour and roadstead covered with transports, victuallers, store-ships, and vessels of war.

I need scarcely remind you that, at the period to which my story refers, the troubles in North America had risen to an alarming height. No longer satisfied to oppose the operation of acts of parliament by means, if not constitutional, at all events comparatively harmless, the colonists had at last come to the resolution of making an appeal to arms, and a civil war, with all its attendant horrors and atrocities, was begun. The skirmish of Lexington having been fought, Boston was placed in a state of blockade, which the sanguinary affair of Breed's Hill had not sufficed to raise. In Virginia, the governor had been compelled to abandon his capital, and seek shelter on board ship; the Carolinas, the Jerseys, with the whole of New England, were in open rebellion. New York itself was infected by the same spirit, and the very Canadas were in danger. An armed party, under the guidance of Allen and Arnold, had made themselves masters of Ticonderoga, from which point they were said to meditate an inroad as far as Quebec; and, which was the most alarming matter of the whole, every thing appeared to be conducted with the strictest attention to form and regularity. These were not the mere ebullitions of popular feeling, violent for a time, but of brief endurance. Deputies from no fewer than thirteen states had assembled in congress at Philadelphia, to whom the duties of government were formally committed by their constituents; and one of the first declarations which they emitted was to the effect that America, having assumed the sword, would never lay it aside till all her wrongs were redressed.

Such proceedings were not without their due influence upon the British ministry. They discovered at last, what might have been surmised from the beginning, that half measures would produce no good effect; and they came to the wise resolution of pouring a large army into the revolted colonies. It was with this design that they caused the force to assemble at Greenock, of which Fraser's High*landers* formed a part; and the whole waited only for a *change* of wind to proceed upon their destination.

Some days elapsed ere the state of the weather, and the inattention of those whose business it was to see the fleet properly supplied for so long a voyage, permitted the troops to embark. During this period I was too much occupied in attending to affairs of my own, to pay much attention to the proceedings either of the young couple or their friend; but I ascertained that between them and Allen Roy the utmost cordiality prevailed, and that the bride was rapidly becoming, as indeed she deserved to be, a prodigious favourite with the soldiers in general. Young, quick, and possessed of an excellent ear, she made great progress in the Gaelic language,—a circumstance which was not without its weight in securing for her the good will of Highlanders; and as her temper was as sweet as her manners were lively and innocent, esteem gradually ripened into cordial affection.

Helen was not insensible of this, nor indifferent to it; few persons, however circumstanced, are indifferent to the good opinion of their neighbours; yet I question whether it added in any important degree to her previous happiness. She adored her husband; she regarded him as the first of human beings; and she loved others only in proportion as they appeared rightly to value him. Under these circumstances it was impossible for her to refuse her most unreserved intimacy to her discarded lover. What though he had been a suitor once—was he not the friend of her Allen? and would her Allen throw her into the society of one, in whom he reposed not the utmost confidence? The thing could not be. She would forget that Allen Roy ever addressed her in other language than that of friendship, and treat him, as she was sure he deserved to be treated, like a brother. She did so, and never had she cause, even for a moment, to repent of the measure. Allen Roy seemed to have entirely overcome the passion which once tormented him; or rather, passion seemed to have given place to the purest and most disinterested esteem; and the three lived upon such terms, as will be found to exist only in the bosoms of families the members of which are *unusually* united and forbearing one towards another.

In the mean while, preparations were going on, if not rapidly, at all events very surely, for the reception of the troops on board the fleet. Fresh provisions were purchased, live stock laid in, bread, flour, wine, and other necessaries, committed to the charge of the ship's stewards; after which, to the inexpressible satisfaction of all concerned, the Blue Peter was displayed at the Commodore's fore topmast. This, as I need not remind you, was the signal for immediate embarkation; and the top-sails being thrown loose at the same moment, no time was lost in obeying it. We marched immediately to the beach, our baggage and stores having been previously stowed away, and boats being there in readiness to receive us, the troops were conveyed, division by division, to their respective ships.

I pass by the occurrences of the voyage, as in themselves but little deserving of notice, and having no reference whatever to the issues of the history which I am at present pledged to narrate. The weather being for the most part favourable, and the breeze light and moderate, the men were enabled to keep a great deal upon deck,—a circumstance which, crowded as they were, contributed not a little to preserve them in health; whilst the officers gladly availed themselves of the leisure thus afforded, to carry on the system of drill, as far as it could be carried within limits so narrow and in a situation so inconvenient. With respect, again, to the young couple, no single accident fell out, calculated, as far as I am aware, to draw upon them the attention of their comrades. Helen Shaw continued to be the idol of the division to which she was attached,—a distinction to which her open yet correct behaviour justly entitled her; whilst the renewed intimacy between Allen Dhu and Allen Roy seemed to become every day more and more exclusive. But these were events too common to attract attention at the time, far less to justify minute relation now. Enough is done when I inform you, that after encountering a severe storm, which scattered the fleet in all directions, and led to the capture of three transports having a portion of the 71st on board, the main body landed at Statten Island in the month of

July, where it was divided into several small battalions, and brigaded with other corps, in the army under the command of General Howe.

For a reason similar to that which caused me to avoid any minute narrative of our voyage, I abstain from giving even a meagre outline of the varied and severe duties in which we were for some time engaged. I may say without vanity, that there were few hard services, from 1776 up to 1781, in which we were not engaged. It was owing mainly to the exertions of part of our corps that Savannah fell in 1778; our services at Brien's Creek in 1779 stand recorded in history; whilst the conduct of the very company to which the two Macdonalds were attached, on the retreat from before Charlestown, was too chivalrous to be passed over in silence.

General Prevost, who commanded us at the affair of Brien's Creek, encouraged by his success there to attempt greater things, pushed on with much rapidity, and considerable show of confidence, to Charlestown. Had he attacked the place immediately, as common prudence required that he should, there is no probability whatever that he would have failed in carrying it; because the garrison, expecting nothing less than the appearance of a British force in their front, was prepared to submit almost without striking a blow. Unfortunately, however, General Prevost considered it necessary to summon the place, and to grant the governor time for consideration,—a measure which ended, as the slightest foresight might have assured him it would, in the refusal of that functionary to open his gates. In the mean while the American General, Lincoln, hearing of the situation of Charlestown, made all haste to relieve it from its exigencies. One of his messengers being taken in an endeavour to pass our lines, was brought before General Prevost, and strictly interrogated; when it appeared that the force of which Lincoln was at the head, not only surpassed us greatly in numbers, but in ordnance also. General Prevost became instantly, and perhaps justly alarmed. He determined to raise the *siege without* a moment's delay; and seeing that

the main roads were all occupied by Lincoln's detachments, he gave orders that the retreat should be conducted along the sea-coast.

I will not detain you by describing, as they merit, the hardships and privations to which this movement subjected us. Enough is done when I state, that our entire route lay through pathless forests, swamps, salt-water marshes, or desert prairies, where not provisions only, meaning thereby meat and bread, were wanting, but where a draught of fresh water was not to be had. I really do not recollect, in the course of a tolerably active career, any period of military service more harassing than this.

This long and distressing march brought us at last to Stono Ferry, from whence the main body of the little army passed in open boats by divisions over to John's Island. It so happened, however, that the quarter-master general, under the guidance of an unprincipled loyalist, by name Macgirt, had gone with a party on a foraging expedition; —and it was deemed necessary to leave a portion of the division in the rear, to protect their return, and see them safe over. One of our battalions, with a regiment of Hessians, were allotted to this service. We intrenched ourselves as well as we could, by throwing up a sort of rude redoubt in the sand, which, though destitute of artillery, and itself scarcely grape-shot proof, promised to afford us some shelter; where we waited with exemplary patience till the foragers, loaded with booty, returned, and made good their passage to the island.

Whence it came about that we were not instantly withdrawn, as soon as the professed object of our sojourn was attained, though I have often asked the question, I have never been able to ascertain. We certainly expected that such an event would follow, and made every preparation for it; but so far was it from taking place, that we were absolutely isolated in our position. Colonel Prevost, the quarter-master general, more occupied, as it would seem, with his plunder than with us, carried away with him the only boats that plied upon the ferry; and we were in consequence cut off from all communication with our comrades upon the island.

A blunder so egregious was not likely to be overlooked by a man of General Lincoln's activity of mind and body. Having full five thousand men under his orders, he no sooner heard of our situation, than he pushed forward two thousand, with the whole of his artillery, to attack us; whilst we in vain made signals to our friends on the opposite shore, that we were in danger. It was now, when the approach of this formidable column had been ascertained, that our company, amounting to no more than four officers and fifty-six men, was sent out to reconnoitre. The country being every where covered with thick wood, we could discover nothing of the enemy for some time, till they suddenly burst upon us in overwhelming numbers, whilst crossing a space somewhat more open than the rest. Not a moment was lost in making such preparations as the circumstances of the case required. We formed as light infantry, fully resolved to hold our ground whilst a man remained standing; and the determination thus entered into was, I do assure you, almost literally carried into effect. The enemy came on with great fury; their numbers, their cannon, every thing encouraged them; whilst we stood our ground stoutly, because we knew that the safety of our comrades depended upon their gaining time to prepare. The result was, that every officer and man, with the exception of seven privates, fell dead or wounded; and that these seven absolutely refused to retreat, seeing that the movement would compel them to leave their officers behind. Finally, the enemy, whether struck by the obstinacy of the resistance offered, or admiring too much the bravery of their opponents to press them hard, ceased firing, and I, with two others, was carried off by these seven champions, in perfect safety, to the redoubt. It may not be amiss if I add here, that the redoubt was furiously assailed soon after; but that the same spirit which animated one company animated the whole battalion. The Americans were repulsed in every charge; and we did not evacuate our little work till after they had withdrawn, and General Prevost considered it expedient to pursue his march upon Savannah.

CHAPTER III.

I HAVE made no particular mention all this while, either of Helen Shaw or the two Macdonalds. The truth is, that though the friends bore their full share in every battle and skirmish, there seemed to be a charmed shield before them, to protect them from injury; and being both hardy and robust in no ordinary degree, they went through the fatigues of desultory warfare without suffering. With respect again to Helen, as long as our services led us only a short distance from head-quarters, and we were pretty well aware of finding quarters, or at least leisure for occasional repose, she followed with patience and perseverance the fortunes of her husband; sometimes toiling on foot in the centre of his company, sometimes mounted upon a horse or ass in rear of the column. On such occasions, it was delightful to see with what alacrity the soldiers in general strove to render her assistance. Her little bundle was carried in turns, not only by Allen's comrades, but by men comparatively strangers to him; there was not a havresack or drinking-horn in the line, the contents of which were not at her service; in camp, in billets, and in bivouac, the snuggest station was always allotted to her; and her hut might have been frequently an object of desire to the general himself. But as the military duties of the corps became more irregular, and its expeditions remote and uncertain in their aim, she was prevailed upon, though not without great difficulty, to stay behind. By this means she escaped the hardships which attended our excursion against Charlestown, and the retreat from that place, of which I have just taken notice; remaining quietly all that while in Savannah, whither she accompanied us at the period of its capture.

From the date of our return to Savannah, as above described, up to the autumn of 1779, our battalion continued to do garrison duty in that place. It cannot, however, be said, that we *experienced* any great accession to our comforts, by being *kept thus in* a state of apparent repose. Partly, I believe,

in consequence of so sudden a change from extreme activity to absolute rest; partly, because the swamps which girdle in the place on two sides emit horrid exhalations; our men, who had born the fatigues of marching with admirable endurance, began gradually to droop, and give way to sickness. A malignant fever got amongst us, to which not a few of our best soldiers fell victims; and as all the efforts of our medical attendants proved inadequate to arrest its progress, the hospital soon became crowded.

Sad and mournful were the scenes which now presented themselves on every side. Men in the prime of life, whose frames seemed capable of setting hardships at defiance, whose hearts were as true as their arms were strong, and their courage beyond the reach of doubt or question, sank under the ravages of disease, no less readily than children; and our ranks were woefully thinned, without any advantage arising from it, either to the cause of our country, or to the renown of the survivors.

Among others attacked by this sad distemper, was Allen Roy. Manfully and stoutly he struggled against it, holding it as a truth not to be controverted, that there are few distempers which a vigorous exertion of resolution will not shake off; but, on this occasion, disease was too many even for his courage, and at last gained the ascendency over him. As a matter of course, an order was transmitted by the surgeon for his immediate removal into hospital, and the waggon, which conveyed the sick to their wards, was at the door; but to this neither Helen nor Allen Dhu would consent, both of them entertaining a superstitious horror of that abode of misery. The latter could not, without a breach of military duty, remonstrate: he only entreated as a favour, that his friend might not be removed: the former, with all the energy which a pretty woman knows how to exert, urged the same petition, and she prevailed. Permission was accordingly granted for Allen Roy's continuance in his quarters, with the understanding that Helen Shaw would be his nurse; and never was promise more cheerfully made, or more scrupulously fulfilled.

For many days Allen Roy kept his bed, during some of which he was delirious; Helen tending him all the while

with the vigilance of a mother. She moistened his lips as he lay insensible, or in that heavy slumber which resembles death more than sleep; she beguiled his sufferings into a temporary forgetfulness by her gentleness, smoothed his pillow when it became hard and knotty from long pressure, administered to him with her own hand every drug which he swallowed; and night after night watched over him, when her husband's duty hindered him from performing that office. Nor, perhaps, was it the least trial to her constancy, that she was condemned to listen, on such occasions, to expressions and declarations, such as could not fail to shock her excessive delicacy. The secret which he had preserved with so much care whilst reason held her sway over him, burst from poor Allen Roy in his hour of weakness. During the paroxysms of delirium he raved continually of Helen. He spoke of her sometimes as the light of his soul, as the object of his idolatrous worship, as an angel too good for him. At other times he upbraided her with cruelty; accused her of deceit, and having broken the vows which she once pledged to him. Then again he would call upon Allen Dhu—implore him not to carry Helen away, but to leave her, at all events, where he might behold her, and drink in the music of her voice. Helen heard all this, and perfectly understood it, though with true womanly delicacy she abstained from repeating it even to her husband; and she never for a moment permitted the uneasy feeling which it occasioned, to interfere with her attentions to the poor invalid.

Allen Roy's constitution was a good one, and the care taken of him such as no man in the regiment besides himself could have commanded. Thanks to these combined causes, he at last began to exhibit symptoms of convalescence: and being spared the confinement, the fetid atmosphere, and nauseous viands of a public hospital, his recovery was not less sure than rapid. But Allen's mind could not regain its tone, either with the celerity or ease with which his body recovered its vigour. The passion which years of determined reasoning had succeeded in smothering up, burst out again in full violence now, and he quitted *his sick room* an altered man, not in heart or disposition,

nanner. Poor fellow! the elasticity of spirit which ıdered him the idol of his companions was gone. He ːd to their society indeed, and to the routine of his and he mixed in the one, and punctually discharged er; but it was with a languor which no efforts on his ıld remove, nor any asseverations of its non-existence

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ːgs were in this ‹state when, towards the latter end ember, 1779, official intelligence reached us, that d'Estaing had arrived on the coast of Georgia, with ɔf twenty sail of the line, besides frigates and tran- and a numerous army, for the purpose of re-capture- 'annah. I cannot tell whence it came about, but we had now been in possession of the place nearly ırs, no attempt whatever had been made to fortify was still perfectly open, depending entirely upon ːr and the swamps for cover; for the abattis which ıp its rear had fallen into ruins, and the total number garrison, including Highlanders, Hessians, and two ıies of the 60th, amounted barely to eleven hundred es. Of the combined French and American army, on ɐr hand, no reports spoke of its being less than twelve ıd strong; whilst many held it to be much more ıs, and all pronounced it complete in every species pment. It would have been extraordinary, had we, such circumstances, experienced no alarm, more ly as we were then commanded by an officer in ittle reliance was placed. Nevertheless, we made reparation to defend ourselves which our very inade- ıeans would allow, resolved not to give away either n or our own freedom without a struggle.

ıs well for us that the French commander deemed it ːy to approach Savannah *selon les régles*. Had led his people where we landed ours, and pushed , as we did, at once to the assault,—high as I rate ɔur of the garrison, I cannot doubt but that he would ırried all before him. But this would have been to grossly every established regulation, — a crime of he Count d'Estaing would not for the world have *lty*. We were regularly summoned to surrender on

capitulation; and time being demanded to consider of the proposal, it was not refused.

I neglected to mention that on the retreat from Stono Ferry, one of our battalions, under the gallant Colonel Maitland, was left to keep possession of Port Royal. To this officer General Prevost despatched immediate intelligence of the perilous condition in which Savannah stood, urging him, should he find the measure practicable, to come to our assistance. Colonel Maitland was not slow in obeying the order. Avoiding all the principal passes and fords which cross the numerous creeks and swamps that divide one station from the other, he made a wide detour through woods and morasses hitherto esteemed impassable, and he arrived with seven hundred Highlanders within our lines, at a moment when it was seriously debated whether we ought not to surrender. Colonel Maitland infused fresh courage into the little army. Resistance to the last extremity was now the universal cry; and measures were forthwith adopted, to render that resistance not only desperate but successful.

You have all doubtless heard of Colonel Moncrief, the distinguished engineer whose life afterwards fell a sacrifice to his inattention to an order which himself had issued. That excellent officer, who was with us on the present occasion, no sooner ascertained the decision of the council of war, than he drew out a circle of field works, upon which every disposable man, both citizen and soldier, became immediately employed. The labour thus imposed upon us was doubtless great, but it produced the very happiest results; for before the enemy had time to offer any interruption, our lines were rendered to a certain extent tenable. Batteries sprang up in every direction, a single night sufficing to complete and arm them; breastworks, flèches, and traverses, blocked up every interval; and the enemy found themselves under the necessity of breaking ground, as if before a regular fortification. Nor were they permitted to carry on their approaches without many a severe check. Several sorties were made, every one of which caused great loss to the assailants, at a comparatively trifling expense of life to us; insomuch that

old exceedingly cheap both the courage and
besiegers.
of these brilliant little affairs, the two Macdon-
ıal, were foremost. Allen Roy, in particular,
ɛt death at defiance, absolutely thrusting himself
of fire whenever he found an opportunity; yet
ood fortune which had on so many previous
otected him, ceased not to operate now. Nei-
Allen Dhu received a scratch, though neither
l one may be said to have courted danger.
had gone on in this tedious manner till the
rst week in October, when D'Estaing, irritated
interruptions, and alarmed for the safety of
ich rode in an open sea, and was continually
ttacks from the English, determined to try the
general assault. With this view he formed
to three columns, an hour before daylight, on
l directing one to penetrate through the swamp
ınd another to attack the river flank, he made
ance in person at the head of the third, against
ch looks towards the inclined plane.
we heard that an attempt was about to be
ere consequently under arms to repel it, some
ere we were able to ascertain where the chief

The morning broke slowly and gloomily, a
ing with the sun, which rendered objects quite
as they were during the night; and hence,
listinctly heard the tread of feet and the rat-
ɔutrements in all directions, we could not tell
vhat routes, the assailants were advancing. By
ever, the fog cleared away. The sun burst
l showed us the enemy in very mixed and ir-
ɛr; one detachment floundering in the bog,
ıad lost themselves, another threatening rather
ng the wharfs, and a third in close and com-
bearing down upon us. We hailed the spec-
ı loud and spirited cheer; and our batteries
ɛ contest began with extreme violence.
charges from the artillery, which commanded

the swamp, served utterly to destroy the column which threatened from that quarter. The men having wandered from the pass, were already more than half defeated by the difficulties of the ground over which they strove to make their way; and the cool and steady practice of our admirable gunners soon completed their rout. In like manner the river column, either by design or accident, forbore to act otherwise than as a feint: but it was not so with the band of brave men which pushed for our principal redoubt, and which the Count d'Estaing led on in person. These advanced with extraordinary courage, under a fire as murderous as I have ever witnessed. Whole sections were swept down with grape and musketry; yet those behind only sprang forward with increased alacrity, to be annihilated in their turn. At last the head of the column reached the ditch, into which company after company poured, exposed to the tremendous volleys which our people threw upon them; ladders were planted, and men bravely scaled them, only to be beaten down with the butts of muskets, or pierced through with bayonets; whilst shouts, groans, oaths, and shrieks, rose wildly and furiously over the roar of battle. At last a French officer, followed by about a dozen grenadiers, gained the rampart, and for an instant the white flag waved in triumph; but it was only for an instant. The officer was stabbed to the heart by the dagger of Allen Roy, whilst the flag was torn down by his friend; and the entire party, which had given such proofs of their devotion and courage, ceased in one moment to exist. It was the last effort of the assailants. Broken, dispirited, baffled at every point, they wavered, retired, and fled,—a few skirmishers only, with admirable self-devotion, lagging behind to cover their retreat; whose fire was so well directed, that it did considerable execution, and checked the pursuit which had already begun.

One of the sufferers from that tiraillade was Allen Dhu. A ball penetrating his groin, he staggered back upon his friend, who kept, as usual, close in his rear; and, uttering a deep groan, he fell, without sign of life or motion, upon the bloody parapet.

ırill, and agonizing was the cry which burst
Roy, as he gazed upon the body of his pros-

end, my friend! my brother, my more than
ook up—one look, only one, to tell me that I
ɜrted. Oh, Allen Dhu, for my sake, for Helen's
ıp. You cannot leave her desolate and lonely
l is too cold to shelter her without you. Allen,
ɜher of my affections! Oh, speak to me!" He
is musket, and leaned over the body with hands
lly together and eyes tearless. "What, not a
a syllable to him who has so long shared your
ıts?—will you not speak one little word to me?"
ɔment Allen Dhu opened his eyes. His lips
l he articulated something, which, however,
ɔe understood. Again he struggled hard, and

poor Helen?" said he, gasping at every sylla-
ıer protector, Allen;—do not suffer her to need

never!" exclaimed his comrade. "So may
ıe in my hour of need, as I succour or desert
distress."
ɨ, thanks, Allen! Promise me that you will
and I can die in peace."
, no! Allen Dhu, you shall not die. You
make her happy, for many, many years; and
ppy too in witnessing your prosperity."
carcely uttered these words, when some others
ɜrs coming up, readily volunteered their aid in
Allen Dhu to his quarters. They raised him
the ground, laid him upon a blanket, and then
ward with much caution, proceeded on their
now a terrible anticipation came over Allen
was Helen to be told of this? who would pre-
a shock so tremendous? The question was
o himself and others to no purpose. Evil
very body knows, fly upon the wings of the
hey were not more slow in reaching the object
d by them on the present than on other occa-

sions. Helen soon heard all. She ran like an insane person through the streets, regardless of every attempt to delay her, till met by the melancholy procession but a little way from the spot where it began.

"Speak, speak!" shrieked she. "Tell me the worst at once. Is my husband dead?"

"No, no!" replied Allen Roy, brushing a tear from his rugged cheek as he spoke. "Thank God, he yet lives! He is wounded, but—"

Helen heard no more. "God be praised! God be praised!" cried she, and fell senseless to the ground.

Of the events which immediately followed, your own imaginations must alone supply you with an adequate picture. Allen Dhu, and his soul-stricken wife, were conveyed with all care and gentleness to their quarters, where every aid which professional skill could afford, was bestowed upon them. As to Helen, she soon recovered from her fit; and feeling that now, more than at any former period, exertion was necessary, she so far subdued her feelings as to become the nurse of her wounded husband. Some days elapsed, however, ere the surgeons gave her any ground to anticipate, that even her assiduity, unremitting as it was, could lead to a favourable result. The ball could not be extracted, though its course was plainly traced with the probe; and whilst that remained in the hurt, it appeared extremely improbable that the patient would recover. But Helen's hopes were of a nature not to be depressed. She was sure that God would not take Allen from her,—he could not die,—it was never designed that she should survive him;—no, no, they only mocked her when they talked of danger to such a being as Allen Dhu. In this manner she contrived not only to reason herself into the persuasion that her husband must be restored to her, but even the patient himself began by degrees to participate in her enthusiasm.

There is no knowing how great the power of imagination may be, even in a case such as that of which I am now speaking. Every practitioner knows, that in what are called ordinary diseases, the patient's recovery depends as *much* upon himself as upon the medicines which he swallows, or the care of his leech; and perhaps the nervous

system may not be without its influence in the military hospital, as well as in the private chamber. Be this as it may, nothing can be more certain than that Allen Dhu, contrary to all expectation, sank not under a wound which from the first had been pronounced mortal. On the contrary, though the hurt itself was far from closing up, no fever or other bad symptom showed itself; and at the end of three weeks, he was pronounced to be in a fair way towards recovery.

I cannot pretend to describe the effect which this blessed sentence produced upon poor Helen. It is true that she had never yielded to the fears which all around her entertained; she had determined not to do so, and she kept her word; but the effort was forced, unatural and laborious, and it led to a profession, perhaps, rather than a real persuasion, in the end. Now, however, she felt, as well as spoke, like a shipwrecked mariner when his foot has touched the shore. Allen must recover; she had all along said so, and she was not deceived. "God be praised! God be praised!" exclaimed she, clasping her thin white hands together, whilst tears, the first she had shed since the assault, poured in streams over her face. "I have ever been taught to believe that *He* is good and gracious, desiring not the misery but the welfare of his creatures; and now I know of a truth, that the lesson is true, even to its letter. Allen, my own Allen, will live. What am I, to receive such unspeakable mercies at His hands?"

CHAPTER IV.

It was well for Allen Dhu, that from the month of October up to the ensuing March, no event of any importance occurred in this part of the world. The Count d'Estaing having lost upwards of 1500 men in the assault, remained in his lines only till the battering artillery could be withdrawn, *and the stores removed*; after which, his army was pre-

pitately embarked, and the fleet sailed for the West Indies. No other enemy showed himself in front of Savannah. During the entire winter of 1779-80, we enjoyed a state of profound peace, from which we were roused only to take part in a war, the very reverse of defensive.

The middle of March was approaching, when an order arrived from Sir Henry Clinton, who was then occupied in the investment of Charlestown, and making preparations for the siege, requiring a strong detachment from the garrison of Savannah to march to his assistance, under the guidance of Brigadier-General Patterson. No delay was used in complying with the requisition; and a brigade, which included in its strength our battalion, immediately crossed the river, and began its march.

At this period, Allen Dhu, though returned to his duty, was far from being in a fit state to enter upon an active campaign. The ball still remained in his groin; he was, in consequence, subject to occasional fits of pain; and the great activity, which used to distinguish him above his fellows, was gone; yet such was his military ardour, that no recommendation on the part of the officers could induce him to remain behind, and he once more took his place in the column, as he had done before. As to Helen, no human power could, I believe, have kept her behind him. Heaven had miraculously given him to her even from the jaws of death,—she was not therefore going to abandon him again; and though repeatedly warned of the hardships which the corps might expect to undergo, she only laughed at the individual who talked of such things as seriously alarming. With the battalion she accordingly proceeded, and a horse being found for her, and every possible favour shown to her by the way, she made good her journey, arduous as it was, without any particular mishap.

The march in question was, like most others in that inhospitable country, productive of a good deal of suffering, and some danger. On every side of us bands of hostile militia swarmed; and our route lying through swamps and difficult passes, it was not very easy to avoid at all times *harassing*, because unprofitable skirmishes.

It is not necessary for me to lay before you a particular

account of the siege and capture of Charlestown. Enough is done when I state, that on the first of April, ground was broken before it, and the first parallel, supported by several strong redoubts, was drawn; and that by the eighth, several batteries were erected on commanding spots, and fully armed with guns. In the mean while, Admiral Arbuthnot, who commanded the fleet, passed the bar with a squadron of light frigates; and in spite of a severe opposition, succeeded in forcing his way beyond Sullivan's Island. He then steered without pausing to the entrance of the harbour, which he effectually blocked up, thus cutting off all communication between the town and the neighbouring country by water. Soon after this, Colonel Tarlton, with his Legion, supported by our light companies, and a provincial corps, surprised and cut to pieces a body of Americans upon Cooper river; and Charlestown became, in consequence, closely invested on all sides. What followed was but the irksome and uninteresting routine of a siege. Our advances were pushed skilfully though slowly; no sorties were made to interrupt us; and every one of the outworks which at all stood in our way surrendered. Finally, after our batteries from the third parallel had played with prodigious effect during the period from the 8th to the 11th of May, General Lincoln, the American Governor, proposed to capitulate. He had already been offered terms, which he refused; and even now he endeavoured to gain from us advantages which his position by no means warranted; but at last he gladly accepted such as our general deemed it just to offer, and gave up the place. The governor marched out with all the honours of war, except that the colours were cased, and the drums were forbidden to beat; and nearly six thousand soldiers, besides a thousand seamen, became conventional prisoners.

Neither our loss during these operations, nor that of the enemy, was great, something under a hundred men being killed, and less than two hundred wounded, on both sides. As to the Highlanders, they suffered in a very trifling degree, not one man, as far as I know, being among the slain. But the consequences to our invalids of so much excitement

as a siege produces, were perhaps as singular as can well be imagined. They absolutely recovered their health, Allen Dhu not excepted; and appeared at the close of the operations more fit for an active campaign than they had been since their sickness began. Nor was much leisure-time granted for the subsiding of the tide. General Clinton, believing that his presence in New York was necessary to save it from the attacks with which it was menaced by Washington, gave up the command of the southern district to Lord Cornwallis; and we very soon found that his Lordship was not disposed to make a sinecure of his trust, either to his own followers or to the enemy.

On the 18th of May, Lord Cornwallis, at the head of a division two thousand five hundred strong, directed his march to Lenew's Ferry, where with some difficulty, arising from the absence of an adequate number of boats, he crossed the South river. This done, a light corps, under the orders of Lieutenant-colonel Tarlton, was despatched in pursuit of the American Colonel Burford, whom, with some four or five hundred men, that enterprising officer totally defeated; whilst the main body, marching upon Cambden, took up a position there, at once covering the frontier of South, and threatening that of North Carolina.

In this situation we remained during the months of June, July, and a part of August, having our front and flanks covered by fortified posts at Ninety Six, Hanging Rock, and Rocky Mount. Active as he was, and zealous in his country's service, Lord Cornwallis found himself so hampered by civil affairs, that to attempt further conquests till the country in his rear had been regulated, would have been, he well knew, to no purpose. In the mean while the enemy, encouraged by our supineness, and justly alive to the critical state of their affairs in this quarter, spared no exertions to embody a force capable not only of resisting us in case of our advance, but of acting upon the offensive. Many daring partisans, likewise, beat up our posts in every direction. Colonel Sumpter twice assaulted the garrison of Rocky Mountain, unsuccessfully it is true, but with great gallantry; a *detachment* of thirty-five dragoons and sixty infantry was

cut off at Fishing Creek; and what was worst of all, our own militia, gained over by the promises of Congress, began to desert in great numbers.

Nor was this all that befell during our compulsory truce, calculated to rouse, if not alarm us. We heard from a source which left no room to doubt the authenticity of the rumour, that the French General Kalbe was advancing from Salisbury with a large body of Continentals; that Colonel Porterfield was leading state troops from Virginia; and that General Caswal, having embodied a strong force in North Carolina, was in full march towards us. By and by it was ascertained that General Gates, who so highly distinguished himself in the North, had arrived to take upon himself the command of the district; and that his army, amounting to full six or seven thousand men, might be expected daily in our presence.

Lord Rawdon, to whom, during his political residence in Charlestown, Lord Cornwallis had committed the charge of the troops, was no sooner made aware of these contingencies, than he began gradually to draw in his detachments, and to contract his columns. With this view the posts at Hanging Rock and Rocky Mount were abandoned, and the army closing up about fourteen miles in front of Cambden, took ground on the west branch of Lynches Creek.

We had not long occupied this position ere General Gates appeared, advancing to the very edge of the creek opposite to our camp; and numerous, though in general not very fatal skirmishes, ensued between the pickets. In particular, a post at Rugeley's Mills, upon which the safety of our left flank mainly depended, was more than once attempted in real earnest, and was maintained only by the daring gallantry of the Legion Infantry which held it. At last Lord Rawdon saw, or imagined that he saw, reason for apprehending that General Gates was about to turn his position, and march upon Cambden, where all our stores, with a multitude of sick and wounded, lay under a very feeble guard. To hinder this, he determined to give up his strong ground at Lynches Creek, and to retire to the town: and he carried that resolution into practice on the 12th of August. We *then established* ourselves at a place of no strength nor

adaptation for defensive operations, called Long Town, where Lord Cornwallis, to the great joy of the troops, soon arrived to take the command.

Early in the morning of the day which followed our retreat, General Gates put his army in motion. He took possession of Rugeley's Mills, sent his baggage with two brigades of infantry, some cannon and cavalry, to the north side of Granney-quarters Creek, and pushed a corps of light infantry across Lynches Creek, on the high road leading to Cambden. It so happened that on this very day we were joined by four light companies, which had hitherto kept post at Ninety Six; and a little before midnight Lord Cornwallis himself crossed the Wateree ferry, and arrived in camp.

No two events could have occurred more happily, or more according to the wishes of the troops. A new spirit seemed at once to arise in every bosom. Men spoke out boldly and decidedly as to the future; and his Lordship's proceedings gave abundant evidence that he would not willingly disappoint the expectations of his followers. The 14th was devoted entirely to the re-organizing of the cavalry, and the bringing of every disposable man into the line; and a rumour soon spread abroad that, before long, matters would be brought to the issue of a battle.

Nothing took place, during the earlier part of the 15th, confirmatory of the expectations which men had formed; but in the afternoon Earl Cornwallis directed Lieutenant-colonel Tarlton to obtain circumstantial intelligence of the enemy's strength and intentions, by intercepting some of his patroles, or carrying off some prisoners from his pickets. Colonel Tarlton was neither backward in obeying, nor unfortunate in failing to execute both the letter and the spirit of these injunctions. About ten miles from Cambden, in the direction of Rugeley's Mills, he succeeded in securing three American soldiers, who reported that they were on their way from Lynches Creek to join the army on the high road, and that General Gates had issued orders for his troops to move from their ground, so as to attack the camp near *Cambden* in the morning. Tarlton lost no time in conveying these men back to head-quarters. Being re-em-

barked there, and their account judged probable, orders were immediately issued for several regiments and corps to stand to their arms. The town, containing magazine, baggage, hospital, and prisoners, was committed to the care of a small body of Provincials, and the weakest convalescents in the army; whilst the entire disposable force made ready to move in any direction, at a moment's notice.

In this state affairs continued till about ten o'clock at night, when the army moved from its ground, and formed the line of march on the main road towards Rugeley's Mills.

We proceeded without meeting with alarm or check, till we arrived at a narrow water-course, called Sander's Creek, five miles, or perhaps something more, from Cambden. Here a slight confusion took place, arising entirely from the difficulty of fording the stream in a dark night; but a short halt remedied the evil, and we again pressed forward. As it was essential to the success of the intended operation, that the enemy should obtain no knowledge of our advance, the strictest injunctions were given to the men to preserve silence. Our people were not unmindful of this. Not a word was spoken from the moment of our quitting the creek; and, except the heavy tread of feet and hoofs, which could not be remedied, not a sound arose indicative of troops in motion. But our precautions, though in every respect such as common prudence required, failed, owing to particular circumstances, of producing their full effect. The enemy, unknown to us, were likewise in motion; and the heads of the hostile columns met, at a moment when by neither party such rencontre was anticipated.

It might be about two o'clock in the morning, when we, who moved at the cue of the column, were suddenly startled by the report of firing in the front. At first a few random shots only were exchanged, as if our advanced guard had fallen in with a straggling party, and had engaged it; but presently a heavy volley was given, and then a rapid and lengthened tiraillade ensued. Now then we began to suspect that work was cut out for us. Mounted officers came *galloping to the* rear, with orders for the regiments to close *up as quickly as* possible; and, in a short time, the three

divisions were joined into one, ready to deploy, or take ground in any direction. This had hardly been effected, however, when the firing ceased with the same abruptness with which it began, and all was for a space quiet.

The truth is, that our leading dragoons having unexpectedly come upon a body of American horse, charged them without hesitation, and with great success. Imagining that the little corps thus dispersed might be a patrol or a foraging party, the advance pushed on, till it was met by a tremendous discharge of musketry, which checked it. From the weight of that volley, there was no room to doubt that the troops in front of us must be in force; and a prisoner or two being happily secured, it was at once discovered that the whole American army was approaching.

Our advanced people instantly fell back; the light companies threw themselves on each side of the road; and the 23rd and 33rd forming line, poured in one or two volleys. The firing thus begun was kept up with much spirit during a full quarter of an hour, without, however, as may be supposed, producing any decided effect,—when both parties, as if actuated by the same motive, ceased. It was now that Lord Cornwallis, with great promptitude and judgment, proceeded to make his dispositions. Unwilling to hazard his army, upon which the safety of a province depended, in the confusion of a night attack, he contented himself with closely reconnoitring the ground, which he discovered to be extremely favourable for his numbers; and then drawing up his line in battle array, he commanded the men to lie down till morning. This was immediately done; and, except that a few occasional shots, in the direction of the advanced sentries, gave intimation that danger impended, the night was passed in as much quiet as if we had been in Cambden.

Day dawned at last, exhibiting to the anxious eyes of the troops, not their own order only, but that of the Americans. Good fortune had brought us into a position, which, from the happy narrowness of its front, secured us against being *outflanked*, and the wise dispositions of Lord Cornwallis *had* undeniably made the most of it. We occupied at this *moment* a sort of wooded pass, or causeway, covered on

either flank by a morass, only one of which was passable, and that by a narrow pathway, very easily defended. Across this the two divisions, as they were called, drew up, Colonel Webster's holding the right, Lord Rawdon's the left. They communicated the one with the other, upon the main road, a little to the left of which, stood two sixes and two three-pounders: and they were supported by the Highlanders, formed according to battalions, one in rear of the right, and the other in rear of the left. Finally, the Legion cavalry remained in column on the right of the main road,—a formation from which, on account of the thickness of the wood, they would have found it difficult to emerge,—with orders to act offensively against the enemy, or defensively in aid of their friends, as opportunity offered, or necessity required. The total amount of force, infantry, cavalry, and artillery, thus arranged, scarcely amounted to two thousand combatants.

In the mean while General Gates had not been inattentive to the duties of his office, nor careless of the safety of his men. Some time before day-break, he had drawn up his army in two formidable lines, placing his Maryland regulars on the right, and his North Carolina and Virginia militia on the left and centre. These were supported, the latter by a corps of well-disciplined light infantry, the former by some squadrons of cavalry; whilst his second line, which, like his first, consisted entirely of infantry, took post some hundred and fifty, or two hundred yards, to the rear. His artillery, again, of which he had a considerable park in the field, drew up partly to the left of the right wing of the regulars, partly upon the high road, under the protection of the reserve; and the whole kept their places with a steadiness and regularity, which would have done no disgrace to Frederick's veterans. His total force, according to official returns afterwards taken, exceeded six thousand men, of which two thousand were regular troops of the provinces of Maryland and Delaware.

CHAPTER V.

It was, I apprehend, the original design of Lord Cornwallis to receive an attack in his favourable position, for which, indeed, all his arrangements seemed to be made; but the day had scarcely dawned when circumstances fell out, which induced him to act on the offensive. General Gates, not satisfied with the situation of his North Carolina and Virginia brigades, unfortunately for himself, chose at this critical juncture to change it. You all know how hazardous it is to alter the dispositions of an army in the immediate presence of an active enemy; and if this be the case where a force is made up entirely of veterans, much more is it to be avoided with raw militia-men. Lord Cornwallis saw the confusion into which his opponent had thrown himself, and hastened to take advantage of it. Putting himself at the head of Webster's division, he ordered it instantly to advance, whilst an aid-de-camp communicated similar instructions to Lord Rawdon, and in a few moments the action became general and spirited throughout the whole line.

A variety of causes contributed to render this battle one of the most striking in which it has been my fortune to take part. In the first place, the unlooked-for meeting of the hostile armies at night had wound up the minds of all to a pitch of no common excitement; whilst the calmness and deliberation with which our position had been assumed, inspired us with confidence the most unbounded. Then, again, the march of our line towards the enemy, cool, steady, and collected, presented as fine a military spectacle as any one could desire to witness; and the cheer that preceded the first decisive volley rang, not in the ears only, but in the very souls of all who heard it. Nor was nature behindhand in giving to the affair as much *of sublimity* as it could well receive. The morning was *dull and foggy*, a thick haze hanging over the swamps *and woods*, which not a breath of wind blew aside: this,

catching the smoke from our muskets and artillery, soon enveloped both armies in a cloud of impenetrable darkness. The consequence was, that after one or two discharges, no estimate could be formed of the effect of the fire, and the regiments pressed on in total ignorance both of the condition and order of the enemy.

No great while elapsed, however, ere the slackened fire from the American militia furnished evidence that they had given way. Our right wing accordingly pushed forward, so as to become gradually separated from the left, which sustained a much more obstinate and doubtful conflict with the Maryland regulars. The Americans were not slow in taking advantage of the opening thus given; they threw themselves in great force upon our centre, and forced it. Hitherto we had been kept in our original order, without finding an opportunity to fire a shot, and it required some exertions on the part of the officers to allay the impatient courage of their men; but now Lord Cornwallis, seeing what had occurred, rode up to us, and the opportunity so ardently desired was afforded.

"My brave Highlanders," cried he, "now is your time; spare your powder, and give them plenty of steel."

One terrible shout followed this brief address, and we rushed forward. No torrent from the hills ever carried with it destruction so immediate; the enemy were swept from their ground in a moment. But the victory was not yet gained. Another strong force, passing us in the haze, penetrated to the very ground on which we had stood as a reserve, and for an instant obtained possession of our two three-pounders; but their cheers attracting the attention of some of the general's staff, we were commanded, without loss of time, to countermarch. We did so, and again the bayonet decided the fate of the day.

After this the enemy made no stand. The militia fled in irretrievable confusion, casting away their arms, and thinking only of their persons. The regulars soon followed their example, leaving guns, colours, and drums in our hands; whilst their cavalry, which vainly sought to arrest the fugitives, and, when that proved impracticable, *to stop the pursuit*, was overthrown with great slaughter

by Tarlton's legion. A more complete rout was never perhaps witnessed; not a single corps, nor even a company, quitting the field in any thing like order.

The day was far spent, ere, wearied with our exertions, and covered with the dust and sweat of a hard-fought field, our little column arrived in sight of the town of Cambden. Intelligence of our success had, however, preceded us, and we were in consequence met by crowds of men, women, and children; every individual, capable of moving, hurrying out to bid us welcome. Of no ordinary character, though of a very varied nature, were the scenes that followed. Here you beheld a wife clasped in the arms of her husband, children clinging about the knees of their fathers, and friend embracing friend; there the poor widow called loudly upon one who would no more answer her, and the orphan wept because its mother wept, rather than from any consciousness of its loss.

But among all who attracted to themselves the regard of the by-standers, none was an object of more universal sympathy than Helen Shaw. Till Allen received his wound at the assault of Savannah, it appeared as if she had never contemplated the possibility of his falling; now her thoughts ran into the very opposite extreme, and, as often as he quitted her to face the enemy, she gave up all hope of his return. This had, in a very striking degree, been the case on the present occasion. As the field of battle was distant from Cambden little more than nine miles, the roar of cannon and musketry was distinctly heard in the latter place; and its effect upon her was described by those who witnessed it, to have been harrowing to the feelings even of the most cold-hearted. She shed no tears, nor indulged in violent expressions; neither did she mix with any of the anxious groups that from time to time assembled in the streets; but wandering away alone to a half-finished re doubt, she sat down there to listen to the cannonade and watch its progress. Many persons addressed her in language of kindness, and would have led her home; but she *scarcely* seemed to notice them, and resisted all their efforts *to remove her.* By and by the firing ceased, and suspense *the most* awful took possession of every bosom. T

whole town was in motion, yet there she continued to sit, her eyes fixed steadily upon the sweep of road, as if life or death depended upon the report of some expected messenger. At length he came. She, and she alone, beheld a horseman afar off, wending his way slowly through the forest: and with the speed of a roe she bounded forward to meet him. It was a wounded officer belonging to a provincial corps, who with difficulty kept his seat; but Helen saw in him only an individual who had borne a part in the battle, and must be acquainted with its results.

"Is Allen safe?" cried she, scarcely able to articulate. "I ask you not who has conquered; but oh tell me, as you hope for mercy yourself, is Allen alive?"

"And who is Allen, my poor woman?" said the officer, kindly reining in his horse, though ill able to endure the interruption.

"My Allen" shrieked she—"Allen Dhu,—the noblest, and handsomest, and kindest of human beings. You must know him—every body knows him, and every body loves him."

"God bless your poor soul!" replied the officer, shaking his head: "your own amiable feelings deceive you. I do not know your Allen; I am ignorant even of the regiment to which he belongs."

"It is Fraser's Highlanders!" exclaimed she.

"Then be of good cheer," replied the officer. "When I quitted the field, they had not been engaged at all, and consequently could have suffered nothing."

"A thousand, and a thousand blessings be upon you for that!" exclaimed Helen; and she ran from him in search of some new informant.

To a person circumstanced as Helen then was, every minute seems an hour, and every hour a day. Though no great space of time elapsed ere other wounded men arrived, her anxiety rose in the interval to a height which bordered upon frenzy, and reason itself tottered upon her throne, when she found that all answered as she had been answered by the first whom she had questioned. At last, however, the Highland garb could be distinguished. A

group of invalids approached, arrayed in the uniform of th
71st, and to these she addressed herself in terms as coheren
as excessive agitation would allow. "Is Allen safe? I
Allen alive?" These were the only words she uttered, a
indeed they constituted the substance of her inquiries, pu
one by one, to all who came from the battle; but they wer
perfectly understood by the veterans now addressed, b
whom the Lowland bride was immediately recognized.

"He is," cried one of the men, speaking rather in ob
dience to the dictates of humanity, than from any knov
ledge of the truth. "The day is ours, and Allen Dhu h
escaped without a scratch."

"I will see him then presently," exclaimed she, burstin
for the first time into tears. "I will run forward and fi
him. Bless thee, bless thee, for assuring me of his safe
How can I ever show my gratitude to you for so mu
kindness?"

"By remaining where you are, Helen," said the soldier:
"or rather by returning with me to Cambden. A batt
field is no sight for you; and Allen will, I am sure, be h
in shorter time than you would waste in looking for him.

It was not very probable that the man's arguments wo
have had the smallest weight with Helen, had her bod
strength been adequate to the undertaking which she me
tated: but it was not. Her frame, delicate at the best, could
long support the violent feelings which agitated her mi
and so sudden a change from despair to hope proved
much for her. A mist rose before her eyes, her br
swam round, and she would have fallen to the ground,
not the kind-hearted veteran supported her. In this c
dition she remained, not exactly insensible, for respira
went on as usual, and consciousness ceased not fo
moment to exist, but with every bodily function comple
suspended, till a sound of martial music suddenly cau
her ear, and in an instant her strength returned.
sprang to her feet, listened attentively, knew that the p
of her own brave regiment were played, and in spit
entreaties and remonstrances on the part of those al
her, rushed forward. Helen was not deceived. She
us about a quarter of a mile from the spot wher

nded comrades had striven to detain her, and found her lest wishes realized. Allen was indeed unhurt, and she, onsequence, the happiest woman breathing.

rom the 16th of August, up to the middle of Septem- it was not our fortune to take a share in any of the ierous, desultory, and unequal operations in which por- s of the army were employed. The consequence was, we neither partook in the glory which Tarlton and the t troops acquired by their brilliant exploit near the awba Fords, nor underwent the many and fatiguing ches which other detachments accomplished for no ose. On the contrary, we rested quietly in Cambden, essed by no other duty than an occasional journey in ol as far as Charlestown, whilst our sick and wounded g carefully attended to, came back to their standards reat numbers.

need scarcely add that by no persons was this interval uiet more keenly enjoyed than by Allen Dhu and his . All Helen's apprehensions seemed for the time to e subsided, and in the society of her husband and her and's faithful friend, Allen Roy, she permitted care anxiety to go to sleep.

think it was about the 20th of September, when his e army having been reinforced by the 7th British ment, besides a good many recruits for the Provincial s, Lord Cornwallis came to the determination of ad- cing into North Carolina. With this view he marched n Charlotte Town, which, after a short and ineffectual stance, was carried by Tarlton's dragoons, supported by w companies of light infantry; and there, for some ons best known to himself, he took up a position. But as very soon discovered, not only that the position was very respect unfavourable, but that the subjugation of th Carolina was an effort beyond the means of our ll army to accomplish.

t would be impossible to convey to the mind of any, ex- one intimately acquainted with the history of those times, adequate idea of the inconveniences to which we were e made *subject*. Surrounded on all sides by a population *dedly hostile*, as well as threatened in front and

both flanks by considerable armed bodies, neither our foraging parties nor patrols could go abroad with safety; whilst our communication was continually interrupted both with Cambden and Charlestown, and all intercourse between us and our detached corps was broken off. It was to no purpose that Lord Cornwallis distributed his troops over as wide a surface of country as they could conveniently occupy. Little benefit resulted from the measure; whilst even the activity of Tarlton and his indefatigable legion failed of making us aware in sufficient time of the enemy's intentions. From this cause it arose, that Major Ferguson, one of our most daring and active partisan leaders, suffered a total defeat at King's Mountain, the Major himself being killed in the contest, whilst Blair's Mill Garden Mill, Polk's Mill, and Cambden itself, were successively threatened.

Lord Cornwallis became alarmed, and not without reason, at these events. He resolved to fall back upon his depots; and sending a courier to recall the Legion from the other side of the Catawba, whither it had gone with view to succour Ferguson, he gathered his baggage and stores together, and the retreat began.

We quitted Charlotte Town in tolerable order on the evening of the 14th of October, following the route which leads to Catawba Ford. The roads, owing to a heavy fall of rain, were extremely bad, the night pitchy dark, and the guides woefully ignorant; whilst of our waggons very many were at once miserably horsed, and still more miserably directed. No fewer than five-and-twenty broke down about three hours after we quitted the town, the whole of which, being first plundered by the rear-guard were abandoned. This was bad enough, inasmuch as a inconsiderable portion of the private soldiers' baggage was sacrificed; but it was followed by other mishaps, even more distressing, because much more mortifying. We had scarcely gained the Catawba settlements, when the Commander-in-chief was taken ill, and all operations became in consequence suspended. Under any circumstances this *would have* been felt as a heavy calamity. Whatever his *rank might* be in these days when British generals are

high throughout Europe, he was, at the period of which am now speaking, justly considered one of the ablest icers in the army; and he possessed the happy talent of pressing those about him, and under his command, with e fullest confidence in his judgment and courage. But war, as in peace, misfortunes seldom come alone. Lord ornwallis became sick at a moment when, more perhaps an at any other, celerity of movement was required; id the army halted in consequence, for some days, in a dis- ict where neither provisions nor forage were to be pro- ured.

The general was so far restored as to enable them to commence their march after the lapse of a few days; id towards the end of the month, we took post at a ace called Wynnesborough.

Whilst the main army occupied this position, a brilliant id successful expedition was undertaken by the light oops, of which, as we chanced to bear a part in it, it may ot be amiss if I offer some description. I stated some me ago, that the whole country round Charlotte Town as decidedly hostile to us, the male inhabitants every- here abandoning their houses, and acting in Guerilla shion upon our communications and small detachments. he example set here was soon followed in other quarters; nd there suddenly started up, on every hand, corps of regular militia, at the head of whom, for the most part, ere men of little military science, but great courage, and good deal of enterprise.

Two of these, on the present occasion, particularly arassed us. One Marrion, a private gentleman, who had oluntarily taken the oaths on our conquest of Charles- own, no sooner saw what he conceived to be a favourable pportunity for revolt, than he embraced it, and, assuming ie command of all the disaffected in South Carolina, ade frequent and annoying incursions into the friendly istricts.

Somewhat similar to him in his views and operations, ough much more formidable, because more experienced nd wary, was General Sumpter, an officer with whom *r detached posts* had already maintained numerous

served success. They failed, however, owing to t
tion of a soldier of the 63rd, who warned the
his danger when we were within two miles of h
Marrion, in consequence, by dispersing his follow
trived to escape. It was not so with General
That officer, encouraged by a slight success
obtained over a detachment sent against hin
Tarlton was in pursuit of Marrion, passed th
River in force, and made such demonstrations as
his design of attacking the detachment stat
Ninety Six. Tarlton lost no time in following h
a series of well-devised stratagems, he contrived
the enemy in the dark, not only as to his object,
his local position; and he crossed the river in
him, without permitting Sumpter to know that
retired from the Wateree.

Every thing went on as could have been wished
little corps attained such a situation as must have
us in one short march upon the enemy,—when
accident which enabled Marrion to escape, occurre
greatly to our annoyance and disappointment.
soldier of the 63rd deserted; and Sumpter, appriz

absolutely slept upon our feet. But our exertions were not made in vain. About five o'clock in the afternoon of the 20th of November, one hundred and seventy cavalry, and eighty mounted infantry, all that from extreme fatigue could be kept together, received satisfactory proof that Sumpter's corps could not be very distant. Our little advanced guard fell in with a strong detachment, which it charged with great gallantry and perfect success; and the main body became soon after visible, drawn up in battle array, close to the river Tyger.

General Sumpter had posted his men with great judgment, and in such a manner as, had he retained his order, and waited for an attack, ought to have secured him the victory. His centre occupied a number of log-houses, placed on the ridge of an eminence, called Blacksmith's Hill; his right was extended along some rails which were flanked by a rugged mountain; and his left held a piece of broken and difficult ground, secured by a bend of the river. By this means, he completely covered the ford, the great road to which led through his centre, and close to the very doors of the log-houses; whilst no inconsiderable portion of his own front was protected from insult by a branch of water running across it.

Colonel Tarlton was not disposed to storm this formidable position, with the small portion of his corps which had as yet come up. He accordingly commanded the infantry to alight, and to scatter themselves in defensive order in the woods; and even of the cavalry a portion only kept their saddles, the remainder dismounting, to rest their horses. But that which his inclination prompted him to shun, the movements of the enemy forced upon him; and within ten minutes of our arrival at our ground, we were warmly engaged.

The truth is, that General Sumpter, advertised of our weakness by a woman, who, on horseback, had watched our march from a hill that overhung the road, considered that his best chance of defeating us would be by attacking us in detail, rather than by waiting to be attacked by our whole force after it should be combined. He accordingly *caused about four* hundred men to advance, and to

our infantry in front, whilst a second party, of similar strength, should take the dragoons in flank. A tolerably warm tiraillade ensued; but our people no sooner brought their bayonets to the charging position, than the enemy gave way with a celerity which surprised, not less than it encouraged us. We pursued with great impetuosity, driving them before us to the very doors of the houses; but here so heavy a fire came upon us, that we suffered some loss, and for an instant or two were in danger of being repulsed.

At this critical juncture, the cavalry, who had dispersed the column sent against them, charged at full speed up the road. The Americans, alarmed, as it would appear, at the thunder of the horses' hoofs, not only broke and fled from the open country, but, with unaccountable infatuation, abandoned their block-houses, and the route became as general and as complete as can well be imagined. Three of the enemy's colonels fell in the action, General Sumpter himself was wounded, upwards of a hundred of privates were killed, and fifty made prisoners. We continued the pursuit across the river till every part of the corps was dispersed and disorganized; after which we returned, by slow marches, to the vicinity of Broad River.

CHAPTER VI.

WHILST these operations were going on, and her husband, as a necessary consequence, was constantly in the field, Helen Shaw was, with great difficulty, persuaded to take up her temporary residence at Cambden. Fain would she have followed Allen in all his wanderings, had he permitted her; but as he saw that her health was not equal to the fatigues to which such an attempt must expose her, he resolutely refused to sanction her making it. With a heavy heart she quitted the lines at Wynnesborough, the very morning when Allen set out to join Tarlton's Legion; and

we saw no more of her from that period till the close of the campaign.

In the mean while strong reinforcements under the command of General Leslie arrived at Charlestown. When these should join him, Lord Cornwallis calculated on being able to bring three thousand five hundred men into the field; and he made immediate preparations for a second and more decisive inroad into the heart of North Carolina. To this, indeed, he was invited, not more by the accession obtained to his own strength, than by the position and resources of the enemy, who, under General Green, were represented to be weak in numbers, and sadly in want of every thing. They were, moreover, understood to be so scattered and divided, as to be assailable, by a brisk movement, in detail. Thus, General Green himself, with one division, was in march towards the Pidee, with the design, as was supposed, of forming a junction with General Caswall; whilst General Morgan, with a select body of light infantry, and Colonel Washington's regiment of cavalry, was stated to be moving upon Catawba and Broad rivers, that he might gather round him the militia of that district and threaten Ninety Six.

Such was represented to be the state of the American army at the close of the year 1780; and Lord Cornwallis was no sooner made aware of the approach of General Leslie's brigade, than he prepared to take advantage of it.

His earliest efforts were directed against General Morgan, whose proximity to Ninety Six, as well as his designs upon the country round it, rendered him an object of extreme jealousy. On the 1st of January, 1781, Colonel Tarlton was directed to cross the Broad River, with his own Legion, infantry and cavalry, five hundred strong; the first battalion 71st, two hundred; and two three pounders; and to push the American commander, if within his reach, to the utmost.

Colonel Tarlton obeyed, but had not proceeded above twenty miles from Brierley's Ferry, when he ascertained beyond the possibility of doubt, that the report which caused his movement was erroneous, and that Ninety Six was in *no danger from Morgan*, who had not captured, and

bably never meant to approach it. He sent immediate intelligence to this effect, to Lord Cornwallis, giving him at the same time very accurate information of Morgan's position and strength; and he himself halted his detachment, till the General's sanction should be obtained to certain plans which he took the liberty of proposing.

What these plans were, I do not pretend to know, but this I well remember, that after a halt of some days, we were joined by the 7th regiment of foot, and fifty dragoons of the 17th; which latter force escorted up from Brierley's Ferry the waggons containing our heavy baggage. On the morning after their arrival, our little column recommenced its march, passing, not without some hazard, the swollen waters of Indian and Dunken Creeks, and receiving at every step apparently well-grounded accounts of the increasing strength of General Morgan.

This, as may be supposed, produced a good deal of communication, by couriers and patrols, between our leader and the commander-in-chief, but it can hardly be said to have delayed our movements for a moment. On the 12th, we turned to the westward in search of practicable fords over the Enmore and Tyger rivers; on the 13th such fords were discovered; and, on the 14th, the rivers themselves were passed, at a spot somewhat above the Cherokee road. Here intelligence came in, that Morgan guarded in great strength all the fords upon the Pacolet, which, in accordance with the general plan of the campaign, it was our business to seize; and, as Lord Cornwallis's column was understood to be in prosperous progress up the eastern bank of the Broad River, Tarlton lost no time in preparing to execute the manœuvre.

The whole of the 15th was spent by the main body in quiet, numerous patrols and reconnoitring parties being sent out, with a view of ascertaining exactly the dispositions which Morgan had made. Of these by far the greater proportion failed in effecting any discovery at all advantageous to us; but one detachment succeeded, after infinite trouble, in discovering a ford upon which no guard was placed, and Colonel Tarlton was instantly made aware of the circumstance. The colonel promptly and judici-

ously acted upon the intelligence. He formed his little band into line of march about an hour before sunset, and took the road which leads up the river towards the iron-works,—thus creating a persuasion on the part of the country people that he designed to possess himself of the foundry; but in the morning his course was suddenly changed, and his light troops were pushed towards the Pacolet. They gained the stream unobserved; seized a ford about six miles distant from the enemy's camp, and kept it without meeting with any molestation till the main body arrived. After this the passage was easy, and we formed before noon on the 16th, on the same bank of the river with General Morgan.

There stood about half way between our present encampment and the American position a sort of hamlet of log-houses, which the brave but unfortunate Major Ferguson had constructed some time back, when acting in this district. Of these our leader determined to take possession; and that he might not be anticipated by the enemy, to whom they were not less important than himself, he pushed forward his cavalry and light infantry forthwith towards them. The detachment succeeded in its design fully, and Tarlton followed as fast as fatigue would allow, with the intention of posting his whole corps under their cover, and watching the proceedings of his opponent. But his patrols having discovered that the enemy were decamped, that plan was laid aside, and the light troops were again advanced as far as the ground from which Morgan had retired. This we promptly occupied; and here, in the midst of plenty, the Americans having abandoned their very provisions in a half-cooked state, we spent an extremely comfortable night.

In the meanwhile numerous bands of well-affected natives, as well as strong patrols of dragoons, were directed to feel their way on all sides, and to ascertain, with as much accuracy as might be, the route which General Morgan had taken. These were not negligent in the discharge of their important duty, and long before midnight word was brought that the enemy had struck into certain by-ways *which led* to Thickelle Creek. Soon after this

prisoner was conducted to the camp, who represented himself as being a militia colonel, and to have fallen into the hands of our people when accidentally straggling from Morgan's line of march. This man fully confirmed the previous reports of our emissaries. He stated that Morgan designed to keep the Broad River on his right, till he should have wearied us out in pursuing him, or drawn us far from our supplies, and beyond the reach of assistance; and that then, and not till then, it was his intention to give us battle, with a corps which every day became stronger and stronger. Finally, he assured us that a formidable force of mountaineers from the Green River were on their march to join Morgan, and that the junction might be expected to take place within a few days at furthest.

Such information as this, coming from such a quarter, was not to be slighted. The troops having enjoyed some hours of sound and refreshing sleep, were, at three o'clock in the morning of the 17th, ordered to fall in, and, the pickets being withdrawn, immediate preparations were made to follow the steps of the enemy. That this might be done without check or hindrance, the baggage and waggons were directed to remain on the ground, under the protection of a guard taken from every regiment; and the officer in command was particularly enjoined not to think of moving till the sun should have risen.

With respect to the column, it began its journey in high order and excellent spirits. The dawn was beginning to appear, ere we gained the bank of Thickelle Creek; and we can scarcely be said to have crossed it ere day broke. From that time forward, however, our advance was both more brisk and more animating. Two troops of dragoons taking the lead, pressed on at a smart trot for the purpose of harassing the enemy's rear; the light infantry followed, fast as prudence and their strength would allow; and the column itself moved at a pace as rapid as was in any degree consistent with solidity and order.

The march had not continued thus above an hour and a half, when the officer in command of the advanced guard reported that the enemy were halted and forming. We were accompanied on this occasion by several loyal inhabi-

tants, who professing, and I believe truly, to be acquainted with every foot of the surrounding country, acted neither as soldiers nor camp followers, but as guides. These men, being consulted, gave a clear and accurate description of the ground which General Morgan occupied. They stated that the woods were open and free, offering no peculiar advantages to a force destined to hold them; that the Broad River was about six miles distant from the enemy's left, at the place where King's Creek joined it; and that by making a curve to the westward, it afterwards ran in a direction parallel with their rear.

All this was exceedingly satisfactory. It showed that, could we but overthrow them here, the great end of our expedition would be attained, the Broad River being, as we had good reason to believe, in possession of Lord Cornwallis; and as there seemed to be nothing very formidable in the enemy's position, our leader made no hesitation about assailing it.

As a preparatory step to the intended battle, the dragoons of the Legion were ordered to drive in several straggling parties of militia, which covered the enemy's front, and concealed the details of his arrangements. This was done with much promptitude, and the Americans were discovered arranged in two accurate lines, along the face and upon the summit of a gentle eminence. An open pine wood was round them, capable, no doubt, of sheltering them in a slight degree from fire, but not sufficiently thick either to screen their movements, or embarrass ours; and their flank depended for support entirely upon the courage and constancy of the individuals who held them. As to their numbers, it is not very easy to speak with confidence. The front line, which consisted entirely of militia, occupied a considerable space, and probably fell little if at all short of a thousand men; the second line, which stood four hundred paces in rear, was composed of five hundred regulars, three hundred back-woodsmen, and one hundred and twenty dragoons.

From the enemy's dispositions it was easy to gather—first, that he had no intention of prosecuting his retreat, and *secondly, that* he had made up his mind to receive,

give the attack; no detriment could have, therefore, arisen from the delay of even a single hour. But Tarlton had succeeded so often in such encounters, that he began to look upon himself as invincible; and to conceive that the very terror of his name must carry all before it. In full accordance with this disposition, he had no sooner obtained a survey of the American corps, than he directed his own to form for the attack. The light infantry moved to the right, extending their files very loosely, till they became equal to the American front; the Legion infantry deployed upon the left, in similar order, whilst the 7th drew up in dense array, placing itself upon the extreme left of the whole. Of the guns, one was planted in the centre of the Legion, and the other, with the right wing of the 7th; and two troops of cavalry, each fifty strong, at once secured our own flanks, and threatened those of the enemy. The 71st again, was placed about a hundred and fifty paces in rear, and with the remainder of the dragoons, amounting to nearly two hundred men, formed the reserve.

This order was hardly assumed, when the troops, having been previously directed to throw off their knapsacks, advanced. Our men, as I need not tell you, were all jaded to the last degree; yet they moved forward with much alacrity, cheering as they went, and passed a space of full five hundred yards in width, at double-quick time. Not a shot had yet been fired, except a few random discharges from certain recruits belonging to the 7th, which, however, were promptly suppressed as useless, and we were already within fifty yards of the American line, which, with admirable steadiness, waited to receive us. At that moment they opened their fire; and never in the course of my whole military life, have I witnessed a more destructive one. Whether it was that the palpable exhaustion of our troops encouraged them, or whether their militia had acquired, from long service, the coolness of veterans, I cannot tell; but they gave their volley with such effect, as to cause our entire front line to recoil. They recovered, however, in a moment, and returned it, when the woods far *and near rang* to the thunder of musketry.

Things had continued in this state about a quarter of an

hour, our troops making little or no progress, when Colonel Tarlton launched his cavalry against the American line, and for an instant shook it. Washington's dragoons seeing this, rode boldly forward; and after a brief but severe struggle, our troopers gave ground.

Now then it became our turn to act. "Forward, Highlanders!" exclaimed Tarlton, waiving his sword; and forward we sprang with the impetuosity which distinguishes our countrymen. It was an overwhelming, but a fatal charge. The American militia gave way immediately; they did not so much as wait to receive our fire, or look upon our steel, but they retreated in a dense body, and were beautifully covered by their reserve. That corps, which had not yet come into play, wheeling back to the right and left, presented an open space for the fugitives to flee through, and then closed up again with the coolness and precision of men manœuvring on a parade.

I need not tell you, that a charge is never made, a regiment never gives the rush, nor brings its muskets to the trail, without some confusion occuring; and if the race be kept up over a very broad space, the line becomes unavoidably confused and irregular. Such was our position on this day. The militia being swept away, no efforts on the part of the officers could restrain the men from pushing forward upon the reserve, and that without a moment's pause to close their files, or even to recover their breath. The consequences were such as might have been anticipated. As we passed our own front line, which by some inexplicable fatality lagged behind, and ran furiously and heedlessly forward, we found ourselves unsupported and breathless within forty yards of the American regulars; and our reception was of a nature not exactly calculated to restore us to our wonted coolness or original order.

I should act unjustly towards the American officer who commanded Morgan's reserve on that day, did I fail to mention him by name, as well as record his proceedings. Colonel Howard (a man not unworthy of his honoured name) permitted us, as I have just stated, to approach within forty yards of him, ere he gave the word to

That word was, however, given at last, and the very first volley levelled with the earth one half of our battalion.

Brave as our men were, and quite unaccustomed to repulse, you will not be surprised to learn, that a slaughter so tremendous, as well as so sudden, completely checked them. Instead of rushing on, a measure to which, indeed, their scattered array was ill adapted, they halted and fired, casting an anxious look back, from time to time, for the support which ought to have followed them: but it never came. A panic the most unaccountable had fallen upon troops, which till now never fought but to conquer. They stood rooted to the ground where our battalion passed them, and left us to maintain as we best could an action with the entire force of Morgan's corps.

A strife so unequal could not in the nature of things be of long continuance. The American militia, animated by the example of the regulars, once more resumed their place in the line. They plied us with volley after volley, to which our feeble tiraillade could offer no effectual opposition; and finally, their cavalry wheeling round the flank of the backwoodsmen, broke in upon us with the noise of thunder. Now then, at last, our people gave way. Scattered, broken, disheartened, more than half of our comrades slain, and not a few of the survivors wounded, what could we do against such a charge? We fairly fled; and our example being followed by the other regiments, a scene of the most irremediable confusion followed.

It was in vain that Colonel Tarlton flew back to his reserve of cavalry, and used every exertion to lead them on. They, like the infantry, were panic-struck; and without firing a carabine or drawing a sabre, they turned their horses' heads and galloped from the field. What followed beggars all attempt at description. Parties fled, formed, faced about, resisted, only to be cut down from behind, or ridden over, till the whole face of the country became covered with fugitives and pursuers, and the ground was spotted with the dead and dying.

In the midst of this tumult the two friends bore themselves, as they had ever done, with the most exemplary

courage and coolness. By the first discharge of Howard's regulars, Allen Roy had received a wound; but as it was not a severe one, he kept his place, and fought to the last. In like manner, when the rout became general, the comrades kept closely together, and a sergeant of their company drawing about him others besides themselves into a circle, they made a bold effort to retreat in order.

At this moment, the enemy, who had seized our cannon, turned one of them, loaded with grape, upon the gallant band. It was fired, and shrieks loud and fearful abundantly testified that it had not been laid inaccurately. But there arose one among these, not of bodily suffering, which more than all the rest thrilled to the hearts of those who heard it. It came from Allen Roy, and it was the melancholy signal that his beloved friend was no more. That dreadful discharge had taken effect upon Allen Dhu, who had hitherto escaped unhurt; and he now lay stark, bloody, and lifeless, at the feet of his countryman.

Not all the efforts of those about him could prevail upon Allen Roy to quit the body. With the fury of a madman he placed himself astride it, and seeing a squadron of horse in full charge towards him, stood to receive them. "Revenge, revenge!" was the only word he uttered. They came on, and one fell dead, pierced by a ball from his musket. The rest closed about him: he stabbed the horse of the first with his bayonet, which reared up and threw its rider; but before he could recover his weapon a second struck at him, and severed the thumb and the fore-finger from his right hand. Even now, though his musket fell to the earth, he seemed to defy his fate; but the American, seeing his defenceless state, arrested a second blow, and riding on left him. The next moment he was grasped by two of his comrades, who risked their own lives to preserve his; and it spite of struggles, as violent as the loss of blood would permit him to exert, he was hurried from the field.

What remains to be told of this disastrous affair, a few words will suffice to describe. Never was dispersion more absolute than that which followed our defeat. A few dragoons only kept with Colonel Tarlton, and retreated as far as Hamilton's Ford, where they halted, to enable such

tives as might escape to rally, whilst the rest plunged at random into the woods and fastnesses, anxious only to escape immediate destruction.

The enemy, however, were not so imprudent as to waste much time in pursuit. Having contented themselves with the capture of all our baggage, which unfortunately came up just as the battle ended, they called in their detachments, and continued their march, effectually escaping the danger by which they had been menaced, and reaching the Catawba in good order. By this means our stragglers, after a day or two of severe suffering, were enabled gradually to draw to a head, and rejoin their leader; and the wounded were sent back, under proper escort, to the grand depôt at Cambden.

CHAPTER VII.

I WILL not so much as attempt a description of the scene which followed, when poor Helen Shaw was made acquainted with the fate of her husband. Let it suffice to state, that things fell out exactly as might have been anticipated; and that though the utmost care was taken to convey the fatal intelligence slowly and by degrees, the shock at last was an awful one. Fainting-fit succeeded fainting-fit during many hours, insomuch that those about her expected that each would be her last; and when these ceased, a frenzy took posession of her brain, which soon brought on a violent fever. For three weeks Helen lay upon a sick bed, ignorant of things past as well as present. All was to her a cold cheerless blank; for reason ceased to act, and she was a maniac.

But Helen's constitution, though not perhaps robust, was as good as usually falls to the lot of women in her station. Health gradually came back, bringing in its train what is *more* important than health—the use of her reasoning faculties; and she found herself condemned to survive every *thing* that she valued, with a full and perfect consciousness

of her situation. And sad and dreary was that situation, and gloomy and cheerless every prospect which the future held out. Deprived of the single being in whom all her affections centred—alone among a crowd of strangers—in a land far removed from the place of her nativity, and penniless as well as desolate, it is no wonder if poor Helen occasionally looked upon herself as forsaken of Heaven. Oh! could she but discover where her Allen lay! it was the only boon which she would ask even of her God: for then she could go and watch beside his grave, till her heart broke, and she was at rest. But even of that poor consolation she was deprived; for he was left, like the rest, to be buried by chance passengers—or, it might be, to become the prey of wild beasts from the forests.

In the midst of this passion of grief, a ray of comfort, feeble indeed, but still to one in her condition valuable, shot upon her, when it was announced that Allen Roy stood without, desirous to see her. That poor fellow, though himself suffering dreadfully, as well from his wounds as from the loss of his friend, had, day by day, called to inquire how the unhappy widow fared, whilst, with an excess of delicacy of which none but a Highlander could be capable, he had not hitherto asked permission to see her. Now, however, having been discharged from the army as no longer capable of active service, and hearing that a vessel would shortly sail for England in which a passage could be procured both for himself and Helen, he came to ascertain whether she was willing to put herself under his protection, to be conveyed back to her relatives in Glasgow.

The meeting of these two persons was one which the most selfish and hard-hearted of human beings could not have beheld without emotion. Hitherto she had been too much absorbed with sorrow to remember that one faithful friend was still left to her; and now that the fact was forced upon her recollection, it produced a strong but not a distressing effect. She buried her face in her apron, holding out her hand to him in silence; and they both, as the Bible beautifully expresses it, "lifted up their voice and wept."

When they had in some degree recovered their composure, Allen proceeded, with all the tenderness of which he

was capable, to open to her his plan as to her futu
ceedings. Avoiding all reference to her deceased hu
as well as every expression calculated to recall to mi
absolute destitution of her state, he spoke only of G
and her father, and strove with as much good sense
rect feeling, to stir up a longing for home, which mi
duce her to propose, of her own accord, to return thi

She listened to him for some time, without appearin
to comprehend his design, or to experience the feeling
he was anxious to excite; but by degrees this obt
grief gave way, and flashes of long-forgotten sen
broke forth. There is no period of our lives at wh
remembrance of the scenes amidst which childhood h
spent, comes upon us with greater force than when
afflicted. Happiness is a selfish and an engrossing
existence: it leaves no room in the mind for other tl
besides such as bear immediately upon the present;
sorrow all our earlier and holier associations are r
and we look back to our first home, as if its very
sphere possessed the power of healing. So was it w
len on this occasion. Being cautiously and prude
to think and speak of her father and the days of he
the desire to return among them easily and natur
lowed; and she made Allen happy by expressing a
disposition to seek shelter under the roof where s
born.

"What is there now to keep me here?" said she.
you, Allen, I entertain, and ever shall entertain, the l
friendship of a sister; but he who possessed all my
no more, and why should I continue in a country
visited only that I might not be separated from him
no, no! I will return to my father's house; heart
and desolate though I be, he will bid me welcome;
consolation is to be found any where upon earth,
may surely look for it."

Allen warmly approved of her resolution; but he
it prudent not to pursue the subject further then.
evident, from her manner of expressing herself, that
ignorant of his intention of becoming her fellow-v
and Allen was fearful lest the announcement migh

ily made, operate unfavourably. He accordingly quitted her, after giving his promise to make inquiries as to the best means of gratifying her wishes: and he even determined, in case she should discover any reluctance to intrust herself to him, not to propose the arrangement. There was more of true delicacy here than might have been expected from a man in Allen's situation: he felt that she might attribute his anxiety on her account to an unworthy motive, and he would not incur that hazard for any reward which could have been offered.

It so happened that the vessel in which Allen had hoped to take a passage to England, received at this time a counter-order, and instead of proceeding home, was directed to convey invalids to New York. This was mortifying, not only because it would retard his own return to Glencoe, but because he much doubted whether Helen would consent to follow so circuitous a route for the mere purpose of securing his protection. The moment was, however, a pressing one. Already had the route been issued, and he was to march in two days for Charlestown, where the transport lay: there was therefore no time to pursue the line of strict propriety to which he had hitherto confined himself. He hurried off to Helen's quarters, and laid before her, not without some embarrassment, the true state of the case.

"Believe me, Helen," said he, "that in proposing that you shall accompany me to New York, and from thence to England, I am guided only by a regard to your own comfort; and if I am mistaken in supposing that you are likely to be more at ease beside me than among strangers, I will never think of the thing again. But you have long called me your brother; you called me so only the other day; and I should ill act the part of one, if I did not offer myself as your protector."

"I understand you, Allen," replied Helen, whilst the tears chased each other over her cheeks; "and I value, as it deserves, the extreme delicacy of your attentions. To convince you of this, I freely and contentedly place myself under your care. You are incapable, I well know, of speaking to the widow of your friend in other language

than her situation demands, and therefore I give myself up entirely to your guidance."

Allen, as may be supposed, assured her that she should never find cause to repent of her confidence; and he faithfully and strictly kept his word.

Neither the journey of the friends, from Cambden to Charlestown, nor the subsequent voyage from Charlestown to New York, were productive of any event sufficiently interesting to deserve repetition. They carried with them the respect and esteem of all who had formerly known them; and Helen was not permitted to quit the regiment without some substantial proof of the regard in which she was held. A handsome subscription was raised for her, to which every man and officer gave something; and she departed, sorrowful, but not despairing, because supported by an approving conscience.

In New York, again, where by a succession of untoward accidents they were detained during many months, the time passed as heavily as it might be expected to pass, among entire strangers; but they clung to one another as companions in affliction always do, and bore the pain of hope delayed with exemplary patience.

It would have been unnatural had such close and constant intercourse failed to lead to a result, which, when it began, neither the one nor the other anticipated. Though Allen forgot not his promise for an instant, and carefully avoided every thing like a declaration of love, his manner gradually assumed an air of increased and increasing tenderness, till Helen could no longer disguise from herself the truth, or refuse to reason with herself upon it.

It was on a bright autumnal evening, just twelve months after the fatal affair of Cowpens, that Allen Roy and Helen Shaw wandered forth upon the ramparts of New York. They took the direction which had ever been their favourite, towards the water battery, from which an extensive and magnificent sea view could be obtained; and they sat down, as they had often done before, to gaze on the expanse of waters, and talk sometimes of Allen Dhu, sometimes of home. There was a perfect stillness around them,

en except by the ripple of the waves upon the beach;
air was calm, the bustle of the town was remote,
; so much as a solitary sentinel kept post here.
time their conversation continued as it had begun;
oke much of their projected voyage, and of the re-
which Helen was likely to meet at its close; but
ees other topics were introduced, no less interesting
to one if not to both the speakers. Still there was no
made either of love or marriage; these were mat-
which Allen Roy had pledged himself never to
—but the probability of parting for ever within so
space of time, was not left unnoticed, and its notice
orth expressions, on his part, of the deepest and bit-
egret. Helen sat silent for some moments; her
vent and came; she evidently laboured under violent
ent; but she either did not hear, or paid no atten-
her companion's declarations. At last she turned
and looking at him with a glance, calm, collected
d, she said—
en Roy, you have kept your promise like a man of
and I thank you for having done so,—yet you can-
ose that I misunderstand the purport of these allu-
You love me, Allen; you have long loved me, and
ld wed me, did I consent."
, Helen," exclaimed he, "why wring from me a
on which I had vowed never to make? Love thee!
I not worship thee? Art thou not the very object
doration, that comes between me and heaven itself?
I live but in thy presence; and when we part, I shall
survive thee."
new as much," replied she. "Now listen to me:
t love you, Allen—I have never loved but one, and
ere her voice faltered for a moment, but struggling
y, she recovered herself—"and he is in his grave.
im are buried all that this heart ever has known, or
know, of womanly affection. But if a regard the
ncere, and a friendship the purest and most sis-
ill suffice, take them; and with them take this poor

held out her hand to him as she spoke.

"How shall I ever sufficiently thank you for this, Helen?" exclaimed he, seizing the proffered hand, and covering it with kisses: "I know that to be loved as Allen Dhu was is, something to which I cannot look; but if you will commit to me this hand, and with it all that you possess the power to give, oh, Helen, you will make me the happiest of men."

"I have done so already," said she: "I am yours from this hour; and now let us be going."

She rose as she uttered this declaration, and putting her arm through that of Allen Roy, walked calmly back to the town. No further expressions of rapture escaped him, nor did she so much as once again recur to the subject; indeed, had a stranger overheard them, he would have been at a loss to surmise that an affianced couple were together. But though, in delicacy to her, Allen suppressed his joy, he was not therefore the less a happy man. He bade her good-night at the door of her lodgings, then only for the first time venturing to ask on what day she would be his; and having received such an answer as his most sanguine desires would have suggested, he bounded off to his own apartment.

The preliminaries which go before the marriage of a poor discharged soldier are seldom very important or very tedious. Allen soon put his trifling affairs in order, and within a short week after their walk on the water battery, Allen Roy and Helen Shaw were united. This change in her circumstances produced, as it was just that it should, a change in Helen's plans for her future guidance. Instead of retiring to Glasgow, and spending the remainder of her days under her father's roof, she readily consented to accompany her husband to Glencoe; and that resolution she soon after carried into effect, merely visiting her parent whilst passing through her native town.

Nor had she any cause to repent of her choice. Allen hired a neat cottage at the gorge of the glen, not far from the point where the Coe falls into Loch Leven; and there, *with his* own industry, and his pension of a shilling a-day, *he supported* her very comfortably. To complete her sources *of thank*fulness, Helen had been married little more than a

year, when she gave birth to a child; and she owned that though Providence had tried her severely, it had not deserted her.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was on a summer's evening, about fifteen months after their arrival in the glen, that, the toil of the day being over, Allen Roy and Helen Shaw sat together upon a stone bench at their cottage door. Her babe lay sleeping upon Helen's lap, who listened to her husband's well-told legends—of the cruel massacre that occurred there under King William, and the numerous and severe persecutions which his ancestors had undergone, in consequence of their loyalty to the house of Stuart. He pointed out to her the spot where the aged Mackian was butchered, when clinging to the knees of Campbell of Glenlyon; he showed her the blackened spots on the hill side, where shielings had been burned with their inmates; and directed her notice to the island where, under a scanty crust of soil, the victims of that act of execrable policy lay at rest.

Poor Helen shuddered at such recitals, and was considering how she might most readily direct the conversation into another channel, when both Allen's attention and her's was attracted to an object not then very common in those parts. A solitary traveller made his appearance, slowly winding down the glen. He seemed to walk feebly and with labour, as if the weight either of years or of sickness was on him; and he paused from time to time to look round, in manifest admiration of the rugged grandeur of the scenery. Both Allen Roy and Helen had lost nothing of the kindness of heart which adhered to them even amidst the hardening scenes of active warfare. They felt for the stranger, for such he appeared to be, and determined to succour him; indeed, they only waited till he should approach them more nearly, to make an offer of *such accommodation* as their cabin afforded.

They were not condemned to endure any very lengthened suspense as to the wanderer's object and designs; he drew gradually towards them, exhibiting, on a near inspection, manifest symptoms that he had been in his day the sport of no common misfortunes. His form, which, had he held himself upright, would have been commanding, was bent nearly double; though more, as it seemed, from toil or sickness than from age. A long beard, slightly grizzled, covered his upper lip and chin; his coat was made of gray cotton cloth, cut short like a frock, and patched in many places; a pair of leather mocassins protected his feet and legs, and a straw hat, tied round with a black ribbon, covered his head. On his back he carried a sort of bag or wallet, such as Scottish mendicants use to contain meal,—and he supported his tottering steps with a staff. Allen Roy advanced to meet him. "You seem tired and ill, friend," said he; "come in, and take a blessing at our hands."

"I thank you," said the stranger, in a low tone; "but I cannot rest anywhere till I have found the objects of my search. If you can direct me to the abode of Allen Roy, you will enable me to perform a promise which I made to one most dear to him."

Both Allen and Helen started when the stranger began to speak. The latter, in particular, rose from her seat, and looked at the speaker with an earnestness of which she was probably not conscious; but the glance seemed to satisfy her scruples, of whatever nature they might be, and she immediately resumed her seat.

"You could not have put that question to any one better able to answer it," replied Allen. "I am the man you seek;—enter, and, when you have eaten and drunk, deliver yourself of your commission."

"I can again only thank you," said the stranger; "but my vow binds me neither to break bread nor drink water in the presence of Allen Roy till I have told him all that I know."

"Be it so, friend," answered Allen, gaily. "Your's seems to be a strange engagement; but it is no business of mine to lead you into a violation of it. Sit down here

between my wife and me, and tell us all that is to be told."

The stranger obeyed slowly, it almost appeared reluctantly—without a doubt, painfully. He did sit down however, and looking first upon the one, and then upon the other, began.

"I am, as my dress has probably led you to believe, a traveller from a far country. Nearly six months have elapsed since I quitted the Alleghany Mountains, on the borders of South Carolina; and I have traversed many lands, and crossed the wide sea, on purpose to converse, as I now do, with you. You have, I doubt not, heard before of one Allen Macdonald, a soldier of Fraser's Highlanders, commonly called Allen Dhu."

"Heard of him?" shrieked his auditors, in a breath. "He was the friend of my bosom," said Allen. "He was the husband of my love," exclaimed Helen. "Oh, if you have aught to say of him, speak on, and I will listen till day give place to night, and night to day again."

"Your friend!—your husband!" ejaculated the stranger. "Are not you man and wife? Is not that babe your child?"

"Yes, yes!" answered Helen, shuddering she scarce knew why. "We are indeed husband and wife; and kind and generous has Allen been to me in my widowhood. But he knew, when I gave him my hand, that my heart was in Allen Dhu's grave; and there it will continue till that grave give up its dead."

The stranger paused for a few moments, during which his dark expressive eye spoke volumes. By degrees, however, he suppressed his agitation, and taking up his story at the point where he had been interrupted, went on.

"Well, well! that is no business of mine. You must know that for many years back I have inhabited a solitary cottage, not far from the springs of the Pacolet. Why I abandoned society as I did in my early youth, it boots not dtote; perhaps I should have done wisely had I not permitted a weak feeling to drag me from my solitude even ow. Well, it happened on a certain occasion, some two

or three years ago, that the sound of war and the tumult of battle disturbed me. Men, I found, not satisfied to work each other lesser evils, could not abide to leave the extinction of life to nature; but must needs destroy one another with fire and sword, they knew not why, and they cared not wherefore. I think it was about the 17th or 18th of January, 1781, that two hostile armies met at no great distance from my dwelling, and a severe and bloody action was fought at a place called Cowpens. As long as the fighting continued, I went not near the savages; I knew that I could not stay their murderous hands, and as to taking part with one side or the other, that my principles prohibited. But on the following day, when all was quiet; when the British had fled in confusion, and the Americans withdrawn in good order, I wandered forth to take a survey of the consequences of their meeting. Many humiliating sights met me there—men headless, mutilated, bloody, and cold; but I discovered one object which more than all the rest interested me, and I approached it. It was a wounded man, lying among a heap of slain; his head was resting upon the body of a dead horse, and his miseries, but for my arrival, must have been in a few minutes terminated. I raised him with difficulty in my arms; I bore him to my dwelling, and dressed his hurts with such simples as the country afforded, and tended him with a brother's care.

"What sort of a man was he," exclaimed Allen. "Speak! was he tall, dark, handsome? was there an American dragoon near the spot where he lay?"

"You have accurately described both the appearance of my patient and the objects that surrounded him."

"And did he recover?"

"He did."

"And his name"——

"Was Allen Dhu."

"Oh what do I hear!" ejaculated Helen;—but, before she could utter another word, the stranger laid his hand on her arm, and as if there had been magic in the touch, *she* became silent.

"*Hear* me out," continued he, "and then act as you see

[illegible]r. The stranger recovered. He told me who he was; [illegible] he possessed a wife whom he loved, God alone knew [illegible] tenderly,—and a friend, who never wronged him, and [illegible] incapable of wronging him. To these he would have [illegible]n long ago; but his wounds having disabled him, he [illegible] incapable of motion, and I undertook to find them out, [illegible] convey them to him. Can I fulfil my engagement?"

"Yes, yes, instantly," exclaimed Helen, starting from her seat, and taking her babe in her arms. "I will follow you, strange man, over the world, if you will but lead me to Allen. Where is he? where is my husband?"

"Helen," said the stranger, "he is here." As he spoke, he cast aside his staff, assumed his upright carriage, pulled off the artificial beard, and stood before them.

"God! what do I behold?" shrieked Helen. "My own Allen restored to me from the grave!"

"No, Helen," replied Allen Dhu, "you are now the property of another; and bitterly as I feel the blow, rest assured that I blame you not for inflicting it. Allen, my friend now as ever, you have been the protector of that woman when she most needed it. You have acted towards her as you ever did, nobly, generously. As to me, I have seen you once more, and I am satisfied."

"No, no, Allen Dhu," shrieked Helen wildly; "you shall not leave me again. You, you only have I loved; you do I still love; with you alone can life be valuable." She paused here for a moment, then passionately kissed the infant—

"There, Allen Roy," said she calmly, at the same time placing the child in his embrace, "take your child, and be kind to it for its mother's sake; and now, my own Allen, I am yours once more and for ever."

She threw herself into the arms of Allen Dhu, who pressed her to his bosom. "It is enough," said he: "Helen has made her choice, and we, Allen, may not thwart her. Come then, my love, pure and chaste to me as ever. But here we cannot remain.—Allen Roy, farewell! we meet again no more on this side of the grave."

Allen Roy did not refuse the proffered hand. He squeezed it fervently, but uttered not a word; and he

stood, with the infant in his arms, motionless as a statue, whilst they slowly disappeared. From that time forth, the history of Allen Dhu and Helen Shaw is a blank; they quitted the Glen, and their course was never traced. As to Allen Roy, he lingered till his son attained to manhood, and then died, as most people believed, of a broken heart.

THE preceding tale was the last to which I listened at the hospitable board of the Chelsea Pensioners. It was in vain that Major Cohorn called in to his assistance the majority of those with whom I had become so strangely intimate. This time I was deaf to their entreaties; and having faithfully promised to revisit them whenever a favourable opportunity should occur, I next morning resumed my journey.

THE END.

WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.